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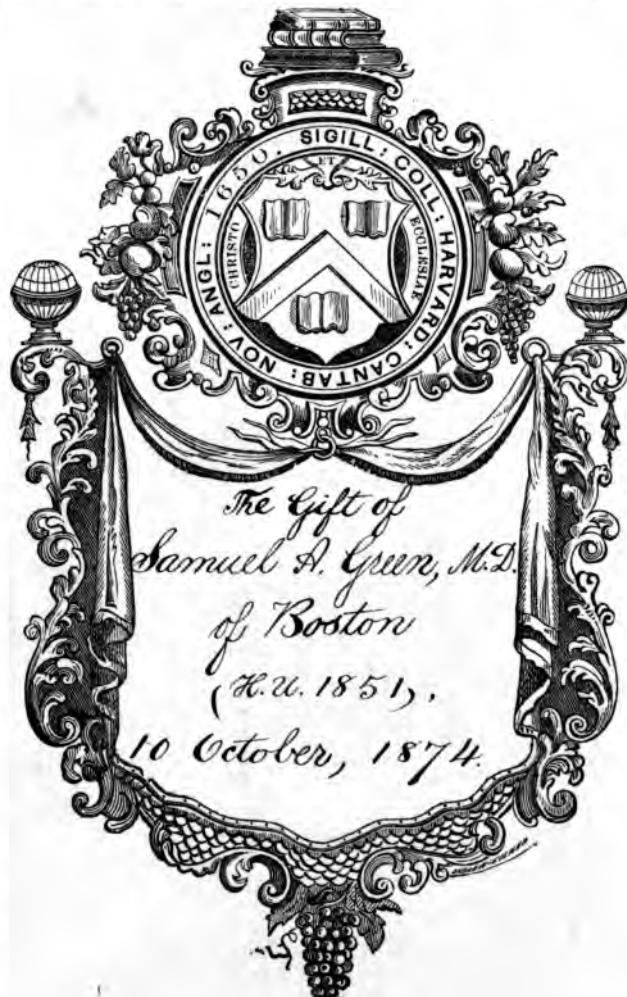
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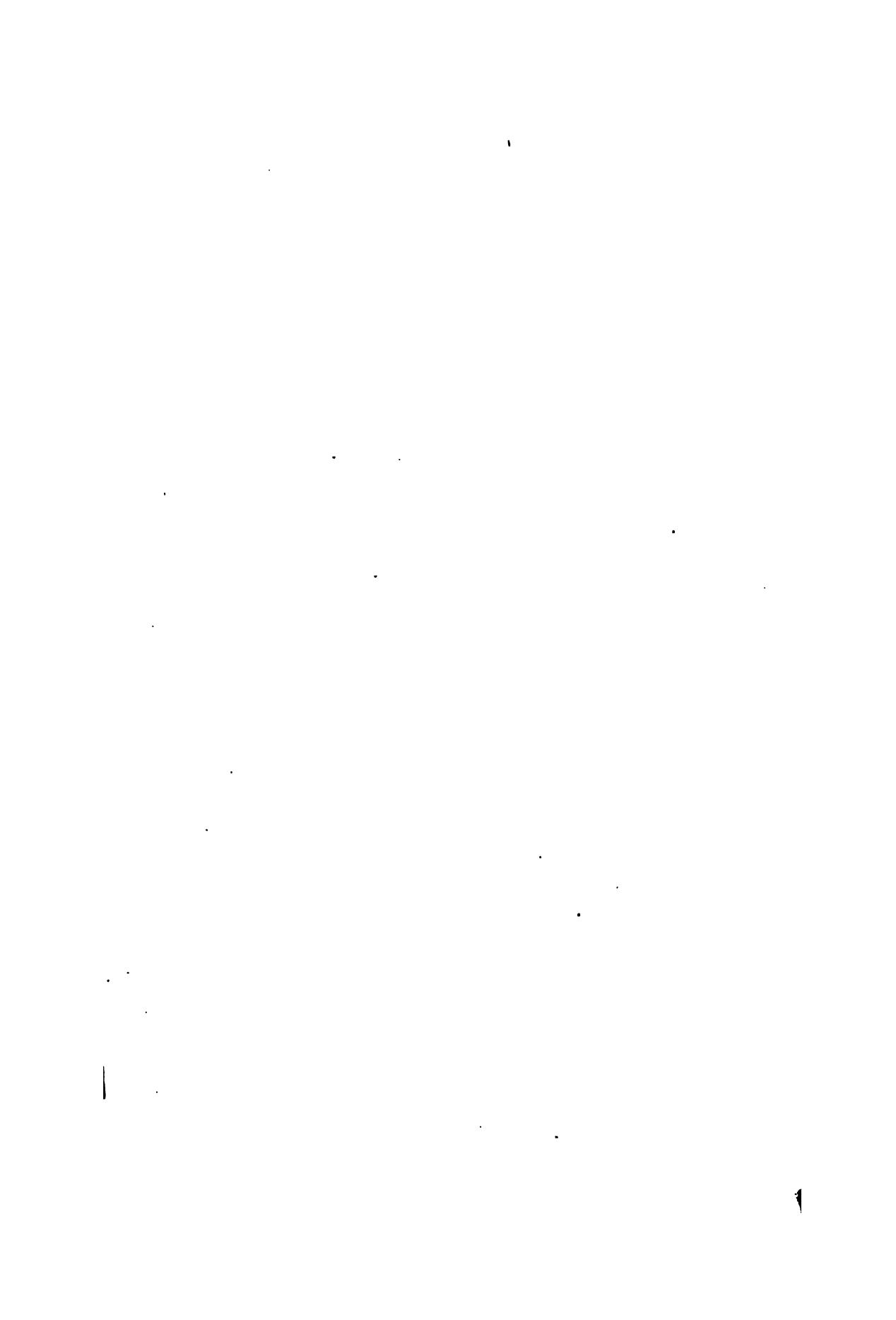
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INAUGURAL EXERCISES

IN

WAKEFIELD, MASS.,

INCLUDING

The Historical Address and Poem

DELIVERED ON THE OCCASION OF

THE ASSUMPTION OF ITS NEW NAME,

BY

THE TOWN FORMERLY KNOWN AS SOUTH READING,

ON

SATURDAY, JULY 4th, 1868.

—•••••—

BOSTON:

PRINTED BY WARREN RICHARDSON, 11 MILK STREET.

1868.



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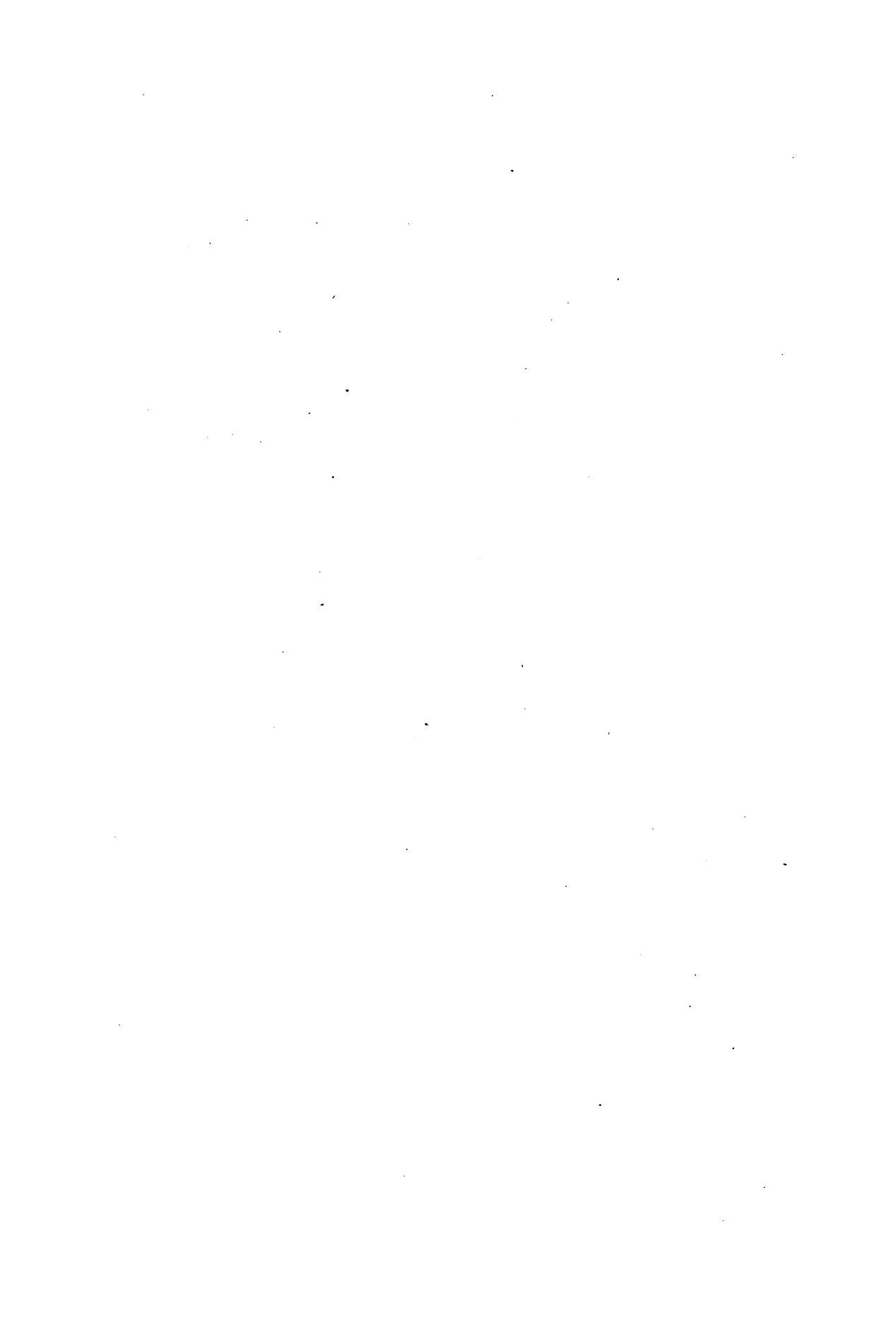
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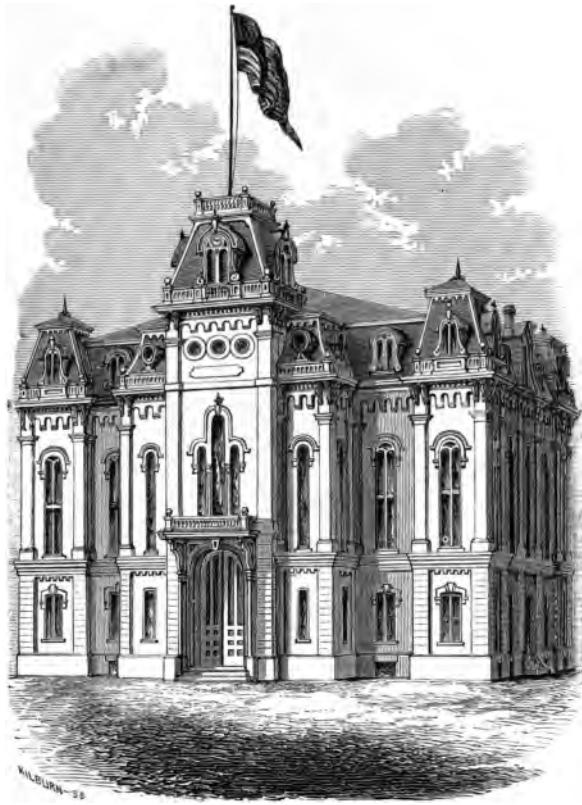
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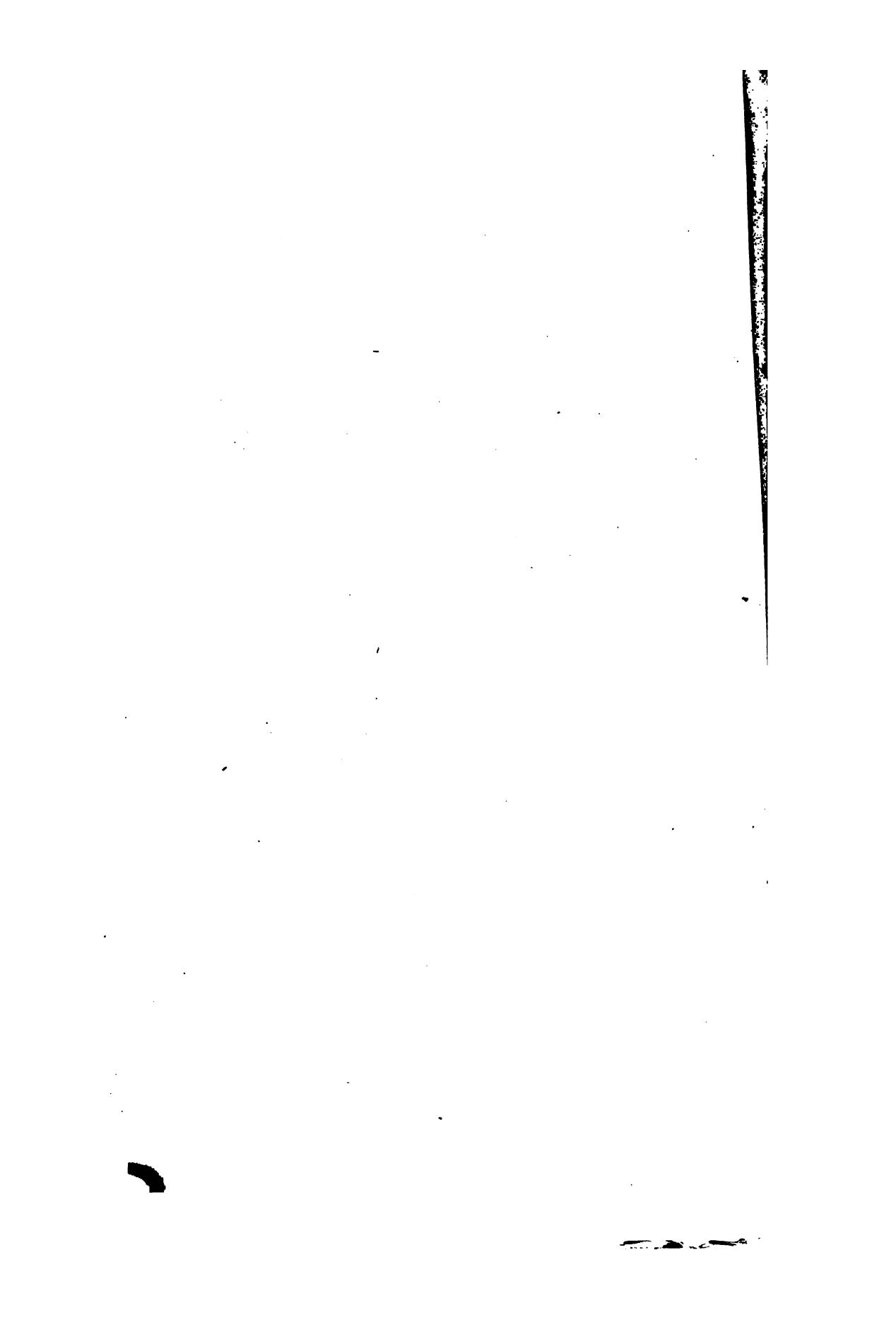
AT THE

Inauguration of the Town of Wakefield,

JULY 4TH, 1868.

*RESPECTFULLY PRESENTED TO THE CITIZENS
BY THEIR FELLOW-TOWNSMEN,*

LILLEY EATON,
JOHN S. EATON,
THOMAS WINSHIP,
S. O. RICHARDSON.



INTRODUCTORY.

AT the request of many citizens, the following pages have been prepared for publication by members of the Committee of Arrangements, who have more readily complied with the request in consideration of the fact, that the intense heat prevailing on the day of the celebration, permitted the attendance of comparatively few of those desirous of listening to the literary exercises of that occasion.

The same cause which prevented the attendance of many persons, had an influence, also, in disturbing certain details of arrangement, and will furnish excuse, perhaps, for the *incompleteness* of some portions of this record.

It may be here remarked, that propositions to change the name of the town had been under discussion, at various times,—many and important arguments being adduced in favor of a change, which discussion finally resulted in the selection of a Town Committee, with instructions, after due consideration of the subject, to report to the town for its action thereon.

The report of this Committee, and also that of another Town Committee, selected to consider the expediency of erecting a Soldiers' Monument, or a Memorial Hall, in said town, are herewith presented, presuming they will furnish ample explanation of the reasons which influenced the town in its decision.

With these explanatory lines, this condensed record of action and events, is respectfully submitted.

PRELIMINARY ACTION OF THE TOWN.

At a meeting of the qualified voters of the town of South Reading, in due form convened on the twentieth day of January, 1868, the following report was submitted:

R E P O R T .

To the Town of South Reading:

The Committee who were appointed to consider the matter of erecting a Soldiers' Monument or Memorial Hall, herewith submit a final report, as follows:

It will be remembered that the Committee have already, at a former meeting of the town, submitted a partial report, and obtained leave longer to consider the subject; that in said *partial* report the Committee represented that a majority of their number was in favor of a Memorial Hall,— first, as being cheaper, if, in the erection of a new Town House provision should be made for such a hall therein; and, second, as being more useful, sentimental and historic, than a simple granite or marble monument; that said Committee also represented that intimations had been given, that liberal donations toward the expense of erecting a new Town House, sufficiently spacious to furnish in addition to other conveniences, a room for a Memorial Hall might be expected; and further, that your Committee asked of the town more time to consider the matter, in order that such intimations might take shape and become definite realities.

The Committee have the pleasure to report that the expectations based upon the intimations aforesaid have been abundantly realized. The Committee are now in the possession of the assurance, ample and satisfactory; First, that a lot of land and a cash

contribution of \$30,000 to \$35,000 (as may be needed) for a new Town House, (and such further sum of money as may be necessary in order to build a house satisfactory to the town,) the same being the gift of CYRUS WAKEFIELD, Esq.; and, secondly, that \$1,000 for furnishing and adorning the rooms, in said proposed Town House, the gift of SOLON O. RICHARDSON, Esq., now await the town's acceptance.

Your Committee would therefore recommend the acceptance by the town of the aforesaid offers, and that in accepting them, the town tender their hearty thanks and lively congratulations to Cyrus Wakefield, Esq., for his princely proposal, and to Solon O. Richardson, Esq., for his munificent offer, and proffer to both these gentlemen the assurance that the town most highly appreciate these splendid gifts, and will hold the donors of them in honorable and perpetual remembrance.

The Committee would also unanimously recommend the passage of the following votes:

First, That instead of building a granite or marble monument to the memory of those gallant soldiers from South Reading who gave their lives for their country, whenever a new Town House shall be built, provision shall be made for a suitable room therein that shall be set apart for a " Soldiers' Memorial Hall," and which shall be furnished and adorned, and supplied with portraits, relics, and other memorials of the lives and services of the living, and especially of the departed brave.

Second, That a Building Committee of seven persons be now appointed, (to serve gratuitously,) who shall have authority to erect in behalf of the town, during the present year, upon such part of the " Noah Smith House Lot," on Main Street, in South Reading, as said Committee shall agree upon, a New Town House of sufficient capacity to furnish a suitable Hall for Town Meetings and Public Lectures, a Soldiers' Memorial Hall, rooms for the Town Library, Town Officers' rooms, and rooms for Military and other Municipal purposes, to cost in addition to the land for a site, not less than \$30,000; the size, plan, materials, and all the details and surroundings to be left to the discretion of said Committee, provided that a deed conveying to said town a site of suit-

able size, and located on said "Smith Lot" shall be secured; and provided also, that a sum not less than \$30,000 shall be gratuitously furnished.

Third, That the Building Committee aforesaid shall be also authorized to appropriate and expend, at their discretion, in furnishing and adorning the rooms in said Town House, such sums of money as are or shall be given for such specific purpose.

All which is respectfully submitted by order, and in behalf of, the Committee.

LILLEY EATON, *Chairman.*

SOUTH READING, January 20, 1868.

At the same meeting, Daniel Allen, from Committee on change of Town's Name, submitted the following

REPORT :

The Committee, chosen by the town to take into consideration the subject of changing the name of the town, and also to designate a new name for adoption, would respectfully report:

In consequence of the action of the town, at their meeting in November last, upon this subject,—then voting, unanimously, to change the name,—the Committee do not deem it necessary to go into any argument, or to present facts upon that subject; still, we are happy to state that in all our investigations, and in all our consultations with our fellow citizens, and in all that has come to the knowledge of the Committee, *all* are in confirmation of the action of the town upon the subject.

One of the most prominent objections to our present position is, that, outside of our immediate vicinity, we have no personal identity as an independent and separate town, which leads to constant inconvenience.

The First, or South Parish, of Reading, was incorporated as the Town of South Reading, in 1812, containing then a population of eight hundred, and a valuation of \$100,000.

From 1850 to 1855, the town of Old Reading lost in population $17\frac{15}{100}$ per cent., while, in the same period, South Reading gained $27\frac{86}{100}$ per cent.

In 1860, Old Reading contained 2,662 inhabitants, and South Reading, 3,207.

It is also worthy of remark, that in the settlement of the town of what is now Reading, North Reading and South Reading, the first settlements were in South Reading, near our present Common.

The Committee, therefore, are of the opinion that we are old enough and large enough to be independent, and to have an identity as an active and independent town.

It only remains for the Committee to suggest a name for the consideration of the Town.

Under ordinary circumstances the proposition to change the name of the town might be met with a variety of opinions; but, under the circumstances of to-day, and, in view of the Report of the Committee, just presented, and the general expressions made to the Committee, we take great pleasure in recommending that the name of the Town of South Reading be changed to WAKEFIELD.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

DANIEL ALLEN,
S. O. RICHARDSON,
J. D. MANSFIELD,
Committee.

Both these Reports were, with great unanimity and enthusiasm, accepted and adopted; and Cyrus Wakefield, S. O. Richardson, P. H. Sweetser, Lilley Eaton, Daniel Allen, J. D. Mansfield, and Thomas Emerson, Jr., were chosen a Building Committee, with authority to superintend the erection and furnishing of the proposed new Town House.

In accordance with a vote of the town, the Selectmen prepared and presented to the legislature, then in session, a petition requesting the passage of an act in conformity with the above expression of the town.

Said petition received prompt attention, and, no person appearing in opposition thereto, the following act was approved by the Governor, February 25, 1868.

Be it enacted, etc.

SECTION 1. The Town of South Reading, in the County of Middlesex, shall take the name of Wakefield.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect from and after the thirtieth day of June, in the year one thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight.

Subsequently, it was decided to make the occasion of the assumption of the new title, a day of general festivity and enjoyment, and to mark its advent with appropriate public ceremonies.

The town having selected the anniversary of American Independence as the day for the proposed celebration, and having voted, also, a generous appropriation to defray its expenses,— intrusted the arrangement and superintendence of the exercises of the occasion to the following

Committee.

CYRUS WAKEFIELD,	S. O. RICHARDSON,
DANIEL ALLEN,	LILLEY EATON,
P. H. SWEETSER,	J. D. MANSFIELD,
JAMES F. EMERSON,	LUCIUS BEEBE,
JOHN S. EATON,	JAMES OLIVER,
P. C. WHEELER,	J. F. MANSFIELD,
N. S. DEARBORN,	JOHN WINSHIP,
WM. H. ATWELL,	THOMAS WINSHIP,
EDWARD MANSFIELD,	WALDO E. COWDREY,
J. C. HARTSHORN,	CHESTER W. EATON,
JOHN F. HARTSHORN,	JOHN G. ABORN,
E. H. WALTON,	T. J. SKINNER,
M. P. WHEELER,	J. WHITTEMORE,
T. A. EMERSON,	JOHN WILEY, 2d,
RICHARD BRITTON.	

This Committee labored with diligence and faithfulness in the arrangement of the various details,— and very *successfully*, also, as the smoothness with which the programme was executed abundantly testified. Especial credit is due to DANIEL ALLEN.

Chairman; EDWARD MANSFIELD, Treasurer; T. J. SKINNER, Secretary; and to CYRUS WAKEFIELD and SOLON O. RICHARDSON, for their liberality and labors in aid of the celebration.

T H E D A Y

opened brilliantly, to the music of pealing bells,—and, through all its shining hours, from a cloudless sky was poured a perfect blaze of sunlight, rendering the shadows of the graceful elms peculiarly grateful and refreshing.

A national salute, at sunrise and at sunset, awoke the hill-side echoes, and helped to swell the mighty anthem of rejoicing which, on that day, rose heavenward from a free and peaceful republic.

The town of Wakefield,—always beautiful,—on this day presented unusual attractions; the brilliant hues of fluttering flags and decorated arches mingling charmingly with its emerald lawns and leafy avenues, which, throughout the day, were filled with a happy and *perspiring* company.

The Committee secured the services of Col. William Beals, of Boston, who furnished the various arches, mottoes and flags, for decorating the streets and public buildings;—while many of the citizens placed upon their dwellings beautiful and appropriate embellishments, and extended to their thronging visitors a welcome, *warm*, cordial and refreshing.

At eight o'clock, the regular exercises of the day commenced with a morning concert, on the Common, by the Boston Brigade Band, which performed a selection of popular airs.

The concert assembled a large collection of people, and the beautiful music of the Band was heartily applauded.

At nine o'clock, a procession was formed under the marshalship of Major John Wiley, 2d, and moved in the following order:

	Detachment of Police.	
Aid.	Chief Marshal.	Aid.
	Brown's Brigade Band.	
	Richardson Light Guard, Capt. J. F. Emerson.	
	Yale Engine Co., No. 1, Capt. Richard Britton.	
	Carriages, containing the President of the Day and CYRUS WAKEFIELD, Esq. ; the Historian and Poet ; Chaplain of the Day ; Reader and Toast Master ; Committee of Arrangements ;	
Aid.	Invited Guests ;	Aid.
	Town Officers and Clergymen of Reading, North Reading and Wakefield.	
	Employees of Wakefield Rattan Works.	
	Employees of Emerson's Sons Shoe Manufactory.	
	Citizens.	
	Children of the Public Schools, in Carriages.	

The procession commenced to move at about ten o'clock, passing over the designated route through the principal streets, and reaching the High School Grounds soon after noon.

The streets along the route, at many points crowded with spectators from this and the surrounding towns, were exceedingly dusty,— and the march in the intense heat was relieved by halts, frequent and refreshing.

The procession presented a fine appearance, and the presence of the school children, in large numbers and in appropriately decorated carriages, added much attractiveness to this portion of the ceremonies.

The exercises, on the hill, were conducted in a large tent, erected for the purpose, where seats had been prepared for the invited guests, aged citizens, etc., and under the guidance of Daniel Allen, Esq., President of the Day.

Rev. Charles R. Bliss opened the exercises, with prayer; after which, the President said:

It becomes my pleasant duty, in behalf of the Committee of Arrangements, and the town of Wakefield, to bid you to our new relations a cheerful welcome. In the order of exercises I shall be followed by those who will give you the interesting facts and details in regard to our town, and the relation which we have this day assumed.

We heartily bid you welcome to our new town, and to the new relations we assume to-day among the towns of the Commonwealth. Welcome to our beautiful hills and valleys. Welcome home,—those of you who were former residents of this town. To all of you, welcome again, not to South Reading, but to the town of Wakefield; we bid you welcome, on this national holiday, to the scenes of your early days, and hope the exercises of this occasion will bring no discredit to the time-honored town of South Reading.

In conclusion the President introduced Mr. B. P. Snow, Principal of the High School of Wakefield, who read, in a very acceptable manner, the Declaration of Independence.

The Band played "Hail Columbia," when Hon. Lilley Eaton was introduced, who read the following

HISTORICAL ADDRESS.

Mr. President and Ladies and Gentlemen:

On this most interesting and joyful occasion, this national birth-day anniversary, this new and memorable era in our municipal history,—the stirring memories of other days, the gallant deeds of our ancestors, in the acquisition and defence of freedom and independence, and more recently, of our brothers and sisters, and sons and daughters, for the preservation of that freedom and independence; the interesting story of our town's early settlement, its progress in population, resources, knowledge and refinement, its present bright and auspicious prospects, all the exciting considerations to which this two-fold celebration of our national freedom and

local prosperity gives rise, come thronging before the mental vision in such profusion as to be well nigh overwhelming. As I look around upon this numerous and expectant assembly, composed of the strength and beauty and *elite* of the vicinity, and find myself standing among the venerable and hoary fathers of the ancient town of Reading, in the presence of the professional talent and official dignity of the town, of the neighboring towns, and of other States, I would fain preserve that golden silence, which is far more precious than any language of mine, and I would be silent, not for the want of thoughts, *kindling* thoughts, for of such I am full, but for the want of *burning* words and animating sentences with which suitably to express the sentiments and emotions of this eventful opportunity.

But a duty has been assigned me as the historiographer of the occasion, that I must proceed to perform as I may be best able. The half hour allotted for this service will permit me to do scarcely more than simply to glance at a few of the more striking events and incidents of our national or municipal story.

It is natural, honorable and appropriate, that at this advanced date and prosperous condition of our village life, we should first revert to our day of small things — to the early settlement of our village, seek acquaintance with those men who first located upon these pleasant plains and swelling hills, and around these lovely lakes, in the midst of what was then a lonely, howling wilderness, — those men

———— “ who did, for conscience sake,
Their native land forego,
And sought a home and freedom here
Two hundred years ago.”

It is good for us often to visit our ancient cemeteries, and meditate upon life's evanescence, among those mossy monuments, where,

“Beneath those rugged elms, that yew tree’s shade,
 Where heaves the turf, in many a mould’ring heap,
 Each in his narrow cell forever laid,
 The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.”

The settlement of this village was commenced in 1639, under a grant of land from the General Court, to the town of Lynn, of “four miles square,” and was called “Lynn Village.”

This grant included substantially the present towns of Wakefield and Reading.

In 1644, seven houses having been erected, and seven families settled, and a little church edifice built, the village was made a town corporate by the name of “Reading.”

This little meeting-house stood on the Common, near where is now our Post-office, and in it the Rev. Messrs. Green, Haugh and Brock, men eminent for their learning and piety, successively ministered up to the time of their respective deaths.

In 1651, twelve years after the first grant, a second grant of territory was made to the town of Reading of “two miles square.”

This latter grant constituted substantially what is now “North Reading.”

The early settlers of our township were rude, but heroic, industrious and pious men.

“Witty and wise, grave, good, among the best
 Were they,—the mem’ry of the just is blest.”

We desire to pay to their memory this day the tribute of our gratitude for their wisdom and sagacity in selecting this spot so beautiful for situation, the constant joy of its successive inhabitants; for their justice, in purchasing it by peaceable negotiation of its former Indian possessors, as appears by a deed thereof, duly signed and executed by their chief men

and women, which is still on record; for their valor and labor and hardships in defending and subduing this then uncultivated wild, and changing it to smiling fields, and a safe and happy abode; for their decided moral character, their stern integrity, their virtuous habits, and their early support of liberty, learning and religion, the valuable influences of all which have been ever felt and enjoyed by their successors down to the present day.

Our early fathers were valiant men, as well as good and industrious ones. For although they themselves made peaceable purchase of their lands of the Indians, and were on friendly terms with their immediate Indian neighbors, yet there were many hostile tribes around them, who made frequent forays upon the English settlements; and the settlers for many years were obliged to labor with the axe or spade in one hand and a musket in the other; to maintain watch-houses and garrisons for their protection, and were often called upon to join in expeditions against the savage foe. They thus became a brave and martial people, and during the first century of our history were frequently engaged in wars with the Indians and French. The names of some of these early citizens became renowned as warriors and leaders.

Richard Walker, their first captain; Jonathan Poole, their second captain; Major Jeremiah Swain, who was commander-in-chief of all the Colonial troops; Capt. Thomas Bancroft, a noted officer in King Philip's Indian war, and others that might be named, shine out on the page of our early record, as eminent for their ability and bravery.

In 1688 the humble meeting-house, erected in 1644, having become too small for the convenience of the people, (for all the people attended public worship in those days,) was sold, and the sum which it brought may give some idea of its size and value; it was sold for twenty-five shillings and a "watch-house frame," and the money was appropriated for *the school*,

showing that our ancestors thus early were mindful of the importance of schooling,—a mindfulness which their successors have ever manifested in a commendable degree, and never more so than at the present time.

Our fathers then proceeded to erect their second meeting-house. It was located a few rods northwesterly of the present Congregational meeting-house, in the easterly part of the present town burial-ground. It was a quaint, unique and curiously formed structure. Our accomplished architect, John Stevens, Esq., who is projecting a plan thereof, finds it more difficult to sketch than he does the more spacious and splendid edifice, whose lofty walls and tower, and elegant halls, are soon to add grace, convenience and honor to our town. This old church was of moderate size, with a roof not exactly like a modern *French* one (but may have been the original idea of one), but was a sort of cross between a "regular pitch," a "hipped" and a "gambrel" or "*surd*," with dormers on at least three sides, and a turret in front, with a bell therein; its windows contained glass of very small size, diamond-shaped, set in lead. Within was a gallery on one side; and on the floor, in front of the pulpit, were long body seats, in which the adult male worshippers sat, who were seated by a committee, chosen annually for that purpose;—the oldest, richest and most hoary in front, and so back in regular gradation, according to age and real estate. The adult females also occupied seats by themselves, on either side, as arranged by the committee, on the same principle. The boys and girls were on the back side of the room, the young men and tythingmen with the singers in the gallery, and the dog-whippers where most convenient to exercise their vocation. There were here and there in the house, pews, which, by special permission of the town, had been built by some of the more aristocratic and wealthy citizens, at their own expense. This house served the people eighty years, and in it preached

the Rev. Messrs. Pierpont, Brown and Hobby,— all liberally educated and distinguished men.

In 1706, the house of John Harnden, situated in the northwesterly part of the town, was attacked by a party of Indians. The family of Mr. Harnden consisted of himself, wife and eight children. Mr. Harnden was absent at the time. The Indians killed Mrs. Harnden and three children, burned the house and carried the remaining children into captivity.

In 1713, the inhabitants of that part of Reading lying north of Ipswich River and Bare Meadow, "having," to use the language of the record, "become of sufficient and competent numbers to call, settle and maintain a godly, learned, orthodox minister," were set off and incorporated as a distinct parish by the name of the "North Precinct of Reading," being the same territory, mainly, that now constitutes the *town* of North Reading.

Until this date (1713), all parochial matters had been transacted by the *town* in its *municipal* capacity. After this, until 1770, the residue of the town, including what is now Wakefield and Reading (then termed respectively the "Old Parish" and "Woodend"), constituted one parish designated as the "First Parish of Reading." In 1768, exactly one hundred years ago, the third church edifice, in this part of Reading, was built; having the same frame as that which now upholds the main body of the present Congregational remodeled church. It stood on a site near its present location, and; for the time in which it was erected, was a large and handsome structure. In 1769, the Rev. Caleb Prentiss of Cambridge, a graduate of Harvard College, became the pastor of the First Parish. He was a liberal divine, of respectable talents, mild and persuasive as a preacher,— patriotic and upright as a citizen.

This same year, 1769, the northwesterly part of the First Parish, the part then termed "Woodend," after several years of earnest effort, and in spite of a most determined opposition

from the First Parish, were incorporated as a separate parish, by the name of the "West Parish of Reading." I have given the dates of these parochial incorporations, because, that although they created simply religious bodies corporate, yet these parishes were the nucleus or foundation of those associations and affiliations that subsequently resulted in the municipal corporations of Reading, South Reading and North Reading. In 1775, commenced the war of the Revolution. Into the spirit of that war in defence of American liberty and rights against the obnoxious acts and growing encroachments of British tyranny, the people of old Reading entered with great unanimity and with all their hearts; to its support they not only *pledged*, but they freely *paid* their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor.

In 1776, July 4, was adopted that immortal document, that "Magna Charta" of our rights and glorious declaration of American Independence, which has just been so impressively pronounced in our hearing, and the anniversary of the adoption of which, ninety-two years ago, we are now celebrating. In reference to that declaration the town of Reading voted unanimously, "to adhere to its sentiments and stand by it to the last, with their lives and their fortunes."

The town of Reading at this time occupied relatively among the towns of the State a position of much importance.

By a census of Massachusetts proper, taken in 1776, the town of Reading was the *second* town in population in the county of Middlesex, and the *thirty-third* in the State proper, and contained about 2,000 people. Boston at the same time contained only 2,700 inhabitants, and Charlestown only 360.

It is probable however, that some 500 of the population of Reading at that time were refugees from Boston, Charlestown and other places. The North and South Parishes then contained about 700 inhabitants each, and the West Parish about 600. The records of the town and of each parish, during the contin-

uance of the war, breathe the most earnest and devoted patriotism and the most determined resolution; and are full of votes for raising and providing men, money, provisions, clothing and fuel, in cheerful response to all the calls of the Government. It appears that the town of Reading sent to the Continental army, for longer or shorter terms, more than four hundred men; and that, without counting minute-men, or men drafted from time to time to guard prisoners, or privateersmen, of all which there were many, there were constantly in the field from Reading, on an average, one hundred men during the war.

Among these enlisted men were officers of talent and bravery; of whom we will mention Colonel David Green, Colonel Benjamin Brown (afterwards General), Captain John Walton, Captain William Flint, Daniel (afterwards Colonel) Flint; Captain James Bancroft, Surgeon John Hart, Captain John Brooks, afterwards Colonel in the army and Governor of the Commonwealth; and there were many others. From the close of the war of the Revolution to 1810, the onward progress of the town was slow, pursuing the even tenor of its way,—witnessing few important or extraordinary changes in its condition, and gaining only about two hundred inhabitants over the census of 1776, but seven hundred over the census of 1765.

In 1812, *two* memorable events occurred to vary the monotony of its municipal life. In the first place, in February of that year, "The Old Parish," so called, exclusive of "Woodend," was set off from the town of Reading, and incorporated as a distinct town by the name of "South Reading."

And in the second place, in the same year, war with England was declared by the United States.

The same general causes and considerations, which resulted *directly* in the declaration of that war, had *indirectly* led to the separation of the South Parish from her sister parishes.

The people of the South Parish, ever true to the government of the American Union, were *Republicans*, almost unanimously; were supporters of the National Administration then in power, and were in favor of fighting Old England for her insults to our seamen and our flag; while the people of the other parishes, not less honest or patriotic, we would charitably believe, but, with different views of political expediency, were, with like unanimity, *Federalists*, unfavorable to the National Administration, and violently opposed to a war with England. Political feeling rose to a high pitch, and parties were very bitter towards each other. The Republicans of the South Parish were a minority in the town, and were excluded in a great measure from influence in municipal affairs or share in town offices. These considerations impelled to a separation.

The town of South Reading, at the time of its incorporation, contained a population of about eight hundred, and the valuation of all its real and personal estate, upon the assessors' books, was only \$100,000.

This newly-made town, although small in territory, in numbers and in resources, was very spirited and enthusiastic.

It contained among its citizens at this time, an unusual proportion of able and gifted men,—men who loved liberty and independence, were qualified to speak for them and to act for them, and were ready, if need required, to fight for them; who appreciated the value of sound learning, and were liberal in its support; and who earnestly sustained religious institutions and religious freedom.

I well remember these men. Nearly all of them have gone to that land "from whose bourne no traveller returns."

I should be pleased to speak particularly of many of them, but time, at present, forbids. Suffice it to say here, that under their influence the town was earnest and efficient in sustaining the Government in the war; cheerfully responded

to all the calls of the War Department; sent numbers of its young men to the field and on the sea; mourned sadly over the defeats of its armies and navy, and rejoiced jubilantly over their victories.

At the close of the war, the citizens had a grand celebration, in thankfulness for the triumph of the American arms, and for the return of peace, with an oration, civic feast and other demonstrations of joy.

Some toasts, given on the occasion, which were received with loud acclamation and swallowed with *ardent* satisfaction, will show somewhat the temper of the people at that time.

The first, by the orator of the day, Charles G. Haines, Esq. —

“*The British Lion* — We have hunted him — we have hunted him to his den !”

The second, by Benjamin Badger, Senr., a Revolutionary veteran, —

“*John Bull, the Pope and the Devil*, — May they never control this happy land.”

The progress of our town, from the time of its incorporation in 1812 to 1844, although not rapid, yet was more marked and considerable than in any previous period of like extent. Its population and valuation nearly doubled in the time. The increasing resources of its inhabitants had enabled them to grant a more liberal support to its public institutions, to its schools, and to various public improvements. The present Town Hall, soon to be so totally eclipsed, was erected during this period, and was considered a handsome and spacious building in its early days. .

The South Reading Academy, established in 1829, on this very spot,* had flourished awhile, gave an impetus to the

* The address was delivered in the High School yard.

pursuit of literature among us; educated some of our sons, who have since become eminent in professional and industrial life, and induced, by its example, an improved condition of our common schools; and as the common schools improved, the Academy declined, and was at length discontinued. Thus went on our town affairs until 1844,—the year bi-centennial.

In this year, as in 1812, two memorable events occurred, again to vary the monotony of our village life. One, instead of being a *separation*, as before, of the various corporations of old Reading, was a *union* of them, in a bi-centennial celebration of the old town's incorporation, and was a most agreeable and interesting *re-union* of the inhabitants of the old parishes, their descendants and friends.

The other event, instead of being as before, a declaration and effort for the victories of *war*, was an effort for the victories of *peace*, in the chartering and construction of the "Boston and Maine Railroad," which was laid through our town in this year, and was to our village a most important event. It opened to the eye of the public these fertile lands, these pleasant plains and hill-sides, and our unrivalled water scenery; it superseded, in a great measure, those toll-bridges that separated us from our metropolis, and were a hindrance to our increase; it brought the merchants of distant cities, in search of goods, to the doors of our manufactories; it has induced the traders and mechanics of Boston to seek homes for their families in this central and convenient location; and it has thus brought among us enterprise, wealth, and liberality. Since its establishment, the town has rapidly improved in population and resources. And while there is not so much that is *fair* and *high* in its Wakefield Station-house as some of us would desire, there certainly is enough of the *fare* and *high* in the privilege of riding in its cars; but we would freely acknowledge its great importance to us, notwithstanding, and hope for greater kindness at less cost in the future.

Among the new comers were men of wealth, talent and activity, who, in conjunction with our native-born citizens of like gifts and character, have given new life to our business and to all our institutions.

In 1861, when the fearful war of the Rebellion burst upon us, it found us not only patriotic and true to the Government and the Union, as always heretofore, but also able, from the multiplication of our numbers and resources, to meet, and to exceed even, all the calls of the nation for men and means, and to raise, during the war, some \$50,000, and to send some five hundred men to the army and navy; men, brave, patriotic, and devoted, "who helped open the Mississippi, who were present at Vicksburg, Port Hudson, New Orleans and Mobile, who saw the starry flag, as it ascended Missionary Ridge, and witnessed the flight of Bragg and his host; who marched from Atlanta to the sea, and who were among those who so long struggled between Washington and Richmond, and who at last saw the rebel flag go down upon the Appomattox."

Of these brave men, more than *sixty*, either in battle or hospital or prison pen, gave their lives for their country. High up in the temple of liberty and of their country's fame, will be the niches that they will occupy; in bold relief, upon the tablets of our Memorial Hall will their names be engraved, and sweet will their memory forever be in the hearts of freemen.

I have said that this increase of population and enterprise has given new life and impulse to the various institutions of our town. And here let me say, that we have been and still are singularly fortunate in having among us men of ample means and generous souls, who have taken pleasure in contributing, from time to time, to those particular moral, social, literary, and municipal enterprises among us, which needed encouragement, and they have given liberally. Hence we find that very properly their names are stamped upon our Library books and school diplomas; are sounded forth, sometimes in

merry peals and sometimes in solemn tones, from our balconies; that we are reminded of them every hour, by day and by night; that they shine in golden letters from the frontal of the repository and head-quarters of our Fire Department; are heard in the martial strains and measured tread, and are seen upon the armorial escutcheon of our Infantry; and stand out in living characters upon our local record. There let them stand and shine, for they are worthy.

These various auspicious influences have caused our population to increase from eight hundred in 1812 to fifteen hundred in 1840, and to nearly four thousand in 1868; and our valuation to rise from \$100,000 in 1812, to \$280,000 in 1840, and to nearly \$2,000,000 at the present time.

Since 1840 our meeting-houses have all been enlarged, remodeled, and improved; the value of our school-houses has been enhanced from \$2,000 to \$30,000; our annual school appropriations have risen from \$1,000 to more than \$6,000; a Public Library of three thousand volumes has been established, and many other valuable improvements have been made; our town is still prosperous and growing,—its star is still in the ascendant.

Under all these favorable circumstances of advancement and progress, our people came to the conclusion that they were entitled to a distinctive, uncompounded, municipal *name* of their own; not because they disliked the name of Reading; for, on the contrary, they love and venerate it for its antiquity and as the name of their own and their fathers' home; and if they could have had a clear and separate title to it, they would have been content. But we foresaw that our town was destined to occupy an important position upon the future page of history, and we desired that whether that position was one of honor or dishonor, that this town alone should have the credit or discredit of it. We wished therefore that its name and its portrait should so correspond that it should not be liable to be mistaken for what it was not.

• We remembered the honorable pride of him, who, hailing from the "Eternal City," when absent from his native land, could exclaim: "I am a Roman citizen," and have his character at once recognized and respected; and we desired that our own townsmen, when absent in another State or nation, and being asked from whence they came, should be able to answer with equal pride and clearness, and commanding equal recognition and respect, not only "that they are American citizens," but also "that they hail from a town or city whose name and identity are clear and manifest." While our people were revolving this matter in their minds, and looking about for a name on which all might unite, our respected fellow citizen, Cyrus Wakefield, Esq., came forward and voluntarily and unconditionally, out of the abundance of his heart and of his regard to the town of his adoption, and the dwelling-place of his ancestors, and from the overflowings of his liberality and his purse, proffered to the town the free gift of a lot of land, and of a building to be erected thereon, for a Town Hall, Soldiers' Memorial Hall, Library and Armory Rooms, Town Officers' Rooms, Withdrawning Rooms, and all other conveniences, of such ample and sufficient capacity for all these purposes, and of such permanence and beauty of architecture and finish, as should satisfy the utmost reasonable wishes of the inhabitants, regardless of cost. In accepting this magnificent gift, the town at once decided for a change of its name, and what that name should be; and forthwith, with unprecedented unanimity, and by acclamation, voted that its name should be changed to *Wakefield*.

And now, to-day, having obtained the requisite authority so to do, we lay aside the old corporate name of Reading, which we have worn, in whole or in part, for more than seven generations, and assume from this day forward the new name of *Wakefield*.

There is this very pleasing coincidence connected with this change of name. .

The town of Reading was originally so named from the city of Reading, in England, for the reason, it is said, that John Poole, one of our earliest and wealthiest settlers, came from that city. This John Poole, in honor of whose birthplace the name of Reading was adopted, was the first settler upon that identical spot now owned by Cyrus Wakefield, Esq., his successor, in honor of whom we this day assume our new name, and is the place now occupied by the extensive "Rattan Factory." This John Poole was a glover and miller; built the first grain and saw mills of the town, and like his latest successor, was its richest citizen.

There is another coincidence, furnishing an additional appropriateness in our new name, viz: Hon. Horace *Poole Wakefield*, recently of Reading, is a lineal descendant of this same John Poole.

It is proper also to mention, in this connection, that our patron and namesake is of Reading and *South Reading* descent. It seems that an emigrant from France, by the name of Wakefield, was an early settler of Boston,—a goldsmith by profession,—that he soon buried his young wife, who left an infant son, Thomas Wakefield by name; that said infant son was put to nurse with the Gould family, on the farm recently known as the "Jenkins Place," then situated partly in Stoneham and partly in Reading. The father soon returned to France, and the son Thomas was adopted by the Gould family. He subsequently became an apprentice to Timothy Pratt, of Reading, to learn the trade of a carpenter. This Timothy Pratt, who was the ancestor of Nathan P. Pratt, Esq., the present Representative in the Legislature from Reading, lived on the easterly side of the "Great Pond," in the old Garrison house, that stood on land now owned by Lucius Beebe, Esq., and was the same house that has been recently purchased and removed by Mr. Zenas Perkins. This young Wakefield married, in 1750, Dorcas Pratt, the daughter of his master, and succeeded to the homestead; and

here, in that old Garrison house, was born Thomas Wakefield, Jr., the grandfather of our worthy namesake.

And now, in conclusion, on this day sacred to liberty, to independence and to victory, let me congratulate my fellow-citizens that we are now free and independent in *name*, as well as otherwise; that we now have a municipal appellation of our own, the reputation and good character of which are committed to our keeping. Let us then resolve, at this auspicious hour, that all our future municipal acts shall be such as shall promote good order, intelligence, humanity, freedom and righteousness among this people, and shall make the town and the name of "Wakefield" "a joy, an honor and a praise in the land."

I will improve this opportunity, in the name and behalf of this people, to thank Heaven for inspiring the heart of our munificent friend to be thus generous to his fellow-citizens; and to thank our friend sincerely for his most princely gift. We would likewise remember, in this connection, that our acknowledgments are also due to that other generous and respected friend, who, in addition to his former liberality, has proffered the sum of \$1,000 for the purpose of furnishing and decorating the halls and other rooms of the new building. Our gratitude therefore to both of them we would express and tender, with our invocations for their future welfare and happiness.

And may he whose name we this day adopt, amid these imposing ceremonies, and may we who have adopted it,—may we all remember that a new and mutual obligation has been assumed by us, never to perform any act that shall demean either party in the eyes of the other, or bring a stain upon the now fair character of the name of *Wakefield*.

And as our town and *future city* shall go onward and upward, increasing in population, in resources, in intelligence, in virtue, and an honorable fame, as we hope and pray that she may, let her never forget the illustrious citizen who has done so much to

enrich and adorn the place of our abode. May he long live to enjoy the sweet reward of reflecting that he has performed a noble and a useful work. May our historians make fair and enduring record of his acts, and our poets, from this day forward,

To all the world his deeds rehearse,
And praise him in harmonious verse.

May the name he this day secures "be better to him than that of *sons* and *daughters*;" may he ever have "that good name that is better than *great riches*," and be found among those whose names are written on high; and at length,

"*Serus in coelum redeat.*"

At the close of the address,—which was finely delivered and highly enjoyed by the numerous assembly,—the Band again played an appropriate air; after which Mr. John S. Eaton delivered the following poem:

P O E M.

WITH joyful voices join, to greet
This birthday of the free;
Each glad return, more dear and sweet,—
The Nation's Jubilee!

On all the winds her banner plays,
Star-gemmed, with folds of light;
A nation's hopes are in its rays—
The red, the blue, the white.

Her brilliant flag, whose matchless hues
Float 'neath the Southern Cross,
And o'er the whaler's daring crews,
On icy waters toss;

Her sacred flag, whose azure field
 The lightest zephyr sways,
 And cheers, when flying squadrons yield,
 The hero's dying gaze.

The polished guns, from plain and peak,
 Opening their brazen throats,
 A people's gladness grandly speak
 In all their echoing notes.

Let the wild tones, unhindered, fly
 From North to Southern wave,—
 Our flag, unfolding, gem the sky —
 Bright banner of the brave !

Thrice blest *this* day, whose breath of balm
 Refreshing blows, and free :
 No slave-step 'neath the Southern palm,
 No slave-ship on the sea ;—

Whose peaceful breath, o'er fragrant groves
 Where battling columns met,
 Only the orange-blossom moves,
 And lifts the violet.

That sacred turf, as emerald bright,
 So rudely torn and red,
 Closing o'er leaders in the fight,
 Enshrines heroic dead.

Brave souls ! with martyrs' zeal endowed,
 'Neath battle's fiery crest,
 With triumph flashing from the cloud,
 Secured the victor's rest.

Bright, starry wings adorn our sky,
 From out the war's eclipse,
 Blessed, as met the prophet's eye
 In the apocalypse.

As this fair angel sweeps the spheres,—

Angel with spotless wing,—

The glories of the coming years

What prophet-bard will sing?

Our brotherhood of mighty States!

Firm on a truer plan,—

For them, a clearer day awaits

With brotherhood of man.

Stretching afar their gleaming lines

'Neath Freedom's ample shields,

Triumphal Art above them shines,

Achieved on bloodless fields.

Westward, the star of empire leads

With most enticing ray;

And all the Prairies' fruitful meads

Are blossoming to-day.

Plains, rolling boundless as the seas,

Whose rich, uncultured sod

Withholds broad harvests from the breeze—

By the fierce Indian trod.

Those flowery wilds—it is decreed—

A mightier tread must feel;

The thunder of the fiery steed,

Steam-winged, and shod with steel.

From East to West, with tireless feet,

Shall flaming coursers bear

To dwellers 'neath the torrid heat,

Products of Northern air;

Through rocky tunnels, cold and grim,—

Marvels of modern skill,—

Along the steep Sierras' rim,

Reach Californian hill:

From West to East, 'neath giant pines,
 And mountain summits o'er,
 Bear golden treasure from her mines
 To the Atlantic shore :

Along the firm and shining rails,
 The wealth of Orient seas,
 Above the Indian's fading trails,—
 Immense, shall roll to these.

So, Progress, with unfettered limb,
 And bold, adorning hand,
 Shall cities build in forests dim,
 With temples deck the land :

Her bands of steel surround the zone ;
 Her conscious wires, the seas ;
 To stainless triumph marching on,
 And grander destinies.

So, down the ages, as they sweep
 Unmarred by clashing sword,
 Swells the blest anthem, strong and deep,—
 Anthem of Earth's accord !

Here, on the bright, rejoicing day,
 Such hopeful omens crown,—
 We come, a pleasant word to say
 For our dear, native town.

Fair town, whose legends, strange and old,
 Wrought from her bending bowers,
 By nobler bard have been enrolled,
 In fairer lines than ours.

His graceful pen, with wondrous skill,
 Traced those ancestral scenes,

And showed where dwelt, on plain and hill,
 The ancient Browns and Greens.

Nor these alone:—with nicest tact
 Those hardy settlers limned;
 Custom and form and word and act,
 In flowing numbers hymned.

For *us*, an easier task remains,
 Befitting humbler powers;—
We sing the beauty of her plains—
 The fragrance of her flowers.

No soft Italian scenes we boast;
 Our summer skies less clear;
 But prized, the grandeur of our coast—
 Our rocky hill-sides dear:

No notes of foreign praise we swell;—
 Not,—“Naples view, and rest”:—
Our invitation is,—“Come, dwell
In Wakefield, and be blest!”

The native Indian, dull and rude,
 Threading the forest wild,
 Beside our lakes enchanted stood,
 Where the Great Spirit smiled.

His wigwam’s shield along these streams
 In rustic beauty sprang:
 Here, in the twilight’s shadowy gleams,
 His dusky daughters sang.

And later, here, our ancient sires,
 By the same waters cheered,
 Over the Indian’s smouldering fires,
 Their scanty dwellings reared:

Fought for their title to the soil,
 With hungry wolf and bear ;
 And where the savage sought his spoil,
 Erected house of prayer.

All honor to those rugged men,
 The coming needs foresaw,
 And laid foundations firmly then,
 Of liberty and law.

Their children here, and children's sons,
 O'erspreading hill and glen,
 Have crowned with grace the work begun
 By those uncultured men ;

With stately dwellings decked the slopes,
 With neat, attractive homes ;
 And crested the fair mountain-tops
 With Learning's ample domes.

Her classic sons, from thence sent forth,
 Superior place to claim,
 Attest their rich, unfailing worth,
 With ripe, scholastic fame.

Sons, absent long, this day returned
 To childhood's rural seat,
 Where kindling fires of genius burned, —
 With welcome true, we greet.

From this smooth, academic ground,
 Whence streams of knowledge pour,
 On smiling valley look around, —
 The waving heights explore !

Broad, fertile fields, and greenest shores,
 With sparkling rim of light,

To generous feast from Nature's stores,
Our willing feet invite.

From rounded Cedar's airy crest,
View lake, with leafy hem,—
Two fairy islands on its breast,
Shining a crystal gem.

The sparkling waters of Smith's Pond,—
(As olden records say,—)
While the green hill-side steeps, beyond,
In verdure stretch away.

Or, climb to Castle's grander cone,
Firm as the mountains be;
Around — the forest's swaying zone,—
Beyond — the restless sea; —

Broad lines of woodland, bending down
O'er smooth and yielding turf,
Touch the bold headland, rough and brown,
Swept by the ocean-surf;

White sails, far o'er the spires of Lynn,
In the blue distance melt—
On rocky coast, the waves roll in
And clasp with shining belt.

Elate, our western mount ascend,
Haloed with golden beams;
Like silver shields the lakes extend;
Like silver threads the streams.

Drink beauty there, at day's sweet close,
While the bright vision waits,
And the celestial splendor glows
At sunset's purple gates!

Northward, the flowery meadows rest,
 Soft in the summer air;
 Beyond, with sunshine on her crest,
 Our mother, Reading, fair.

Calm and sedate — as mother may —
 Over the lake's clear tide,
 Watches her daughter's prosperous way,
 Arrayed as blooming bride;

Bride, on whose flower-encircled brow
 No mark of years we trace;
 Clad in her youthful beauty now,
 With added lines of grace.

And when, complete, her bridal gift,
 Munificent and fair,
 Heavenward, its massive towers shall lift
 In the caressing air,

To greet the mornings, still and bright,
 Through many coming days, —
 Shall all the people, with delight,
 Award its donor praise.

His gift, for whom, from burning plains,
 O'er storuny billows rolled,
 Are sent those slender, magic canes,
 His touch transmutes to gold; —

His crowning gift, whose lavish hands,
 And fresh, persistent powers,
 With verdure vests our level lands,
 Our thorny wastes, with flowers; —

Who answers well that question old —
 “*What is there in a name?*”
 An answer, clearly, grandly rolled,
And mounts therewith to fame!

With smiles go forth the youthful brides,
 Circled with fairest flowers,
Afar from home, to tempt life's tides—
Not thus we offer ours!

Our town beloved, our cherished pet,
 Our darling and our pride ;
 In golden ring her name is set—
We keep ourselves the bride !

Our pine-clad hills and shadowy brakes,
 And flower-enamelled lawns ;
 Our rocky peaks and rippled lakes,
 Bright in the rosy dawns ;

Our darkling dells and forest-plumes,
 Our sprays of brilliant leaves,
 Our arching elms and garden-blooms,
 Fair in the golden eves ;

Our spotless blossoms, floating fair
 Upon the crystal waves ;
 Our glitt'ring spires in sunlit air ;
 Our father's hallowed graves ;

And all the wealth our records bear
 Of old historic fame ;
All these we hold with strictest care,—
And YIELD, alone, our name !

'Neath the bright Future's glowing arch
 Of soft, unclouded skies,
 What grand processions gayly march !
 What startling visions rise !

When fifty added years shall bring
 Their gifts of fair renown,

A sweeter bard their praise shall sing,
And nobler works shall crown !

The city, from her triple hills,
With ocean-girdle bound,
Already looks toward mountain rills,—
Selecting ampler ground ;

Has gathered, now, rich Highland farms,
And, overcrowded thus,
Northward may stretch embracing arms,
And Boston come to us!

Within that shining circle bound,
Whose polished "*Hub*" we boast,
Our rustic charms no more be found,
And our new name be lost!

From this clear summit, looking on
Toward crowning heights of grace,
Our thoughts revert to pleasures gone —
The vanished years retrace.

From out the shadowy haunts of eld,
From ancient roofs, moss-grown,
Arise the forms those years beheld,
And swells aerial tone ;

Forms, lost to sight, to memory dear,
Those mystic chambers fill,—
Tones, lost to earth, from purer sphere,
Our waiting spirits thrill !

As the fond lovers linger long,
Nor haste to *say* farewells,—
As the swan's sad, expiring song
In sweetèst cadence swells,—

So, on memories fond, intent,
We linger with the past;
 And the fair name, with childhood blent,
Seems sweetest at the last!

Dear name, farewell! Our task is o'er;
 The coming glories see!
 South Reading, henceforth, nevermore,—
 And Wakefield let it be!

At the termination of the literary and musical exercises, on Academy Hill, a procession, consisting of those persons who were intending to participate in the Celebration Dinner, was formed and marched to the dining tent which had been erected upon the Common.

At the same time, the children belonging to the several schools of the town were furnished with a collation in the Town Hall.

The "Mammoth Tent," in which the dinner was served, covered sufficient space to accommodate, at table, two thousand guests; and the dinner, furnished by Mr. A. A. Currier as caterer, proved to be an ample, satisfying and enjoyable entertainment to its thousand participants.

Many of the former residents of South Reading,—now widely separated, and holding honorable positions in the various professions,—on this day re-visiting the scenes of their boyhood as guests, surrounded the table, thereby adding as much to their *own* enjoyment, let us hope, as did their presence to the interest and success of the celebration.

The committee present the following record of the literary exercises which succeeded the dinner,—a record unavoidably imperfect, from the fact that no detailed report of those exercises

was then written, so that the present synopsis of them has been prepared, in part, from memory.

The President introduced Mr. Thomas Winship, as the Toast-Master selected for the occasion, who gave,

THE DAY WE CELEBRATE:

Hallowed by associations of a *national* character in connection with the Declaration of Independence, to which we shall hereafter add associations of a *local* character, in connection with the declaration of our *new name*.

Response by the Band.

OUR COUNTRY:

Purified by the fiery ordeal through which she has passed, may she continue to hold the proud position she now occupies in the great family of nations.

Response by the Band.

THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS:

She may, at times, be a little hot-headed, and somewhat radical in her views; but the influence of her pure heart and honest purpose, finally cools her head, and corrects her judgment.

In response the following letter was read :

**COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS,
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT, BOSTON, June 30, 1868.**

GENTLEMEN: I thank you for remembering me so kindly in making your preparations for celebrating the new christening of your town, on the fourth of July. I only regret that I cannot be with you and share in your exercises.

I was most happy, by the use of a pen for a single moment, to give effect to the act which will henceforth associate the name of your town with the name of a public-spirited and patriotic citizen, whose munificence reflects credit upon him, and confers beneficence upon you.

It is a high honor which you bestow upon him, to take to the town his name and wear it henceforth; but it is worthily and fitly conferred. In all that he has done, and is willing yet to do, I wish he had more rivals and more equals.

Henceforth, the town, Wakefield, shall be a monument to the name, Wakefield.

May both conduct themselves as well in the future as they have in the past.

I remain, with great respect,

Very truly, your ob't serv't,

ALEX. H. BULLOCK, *Governor.*

Messrs. DANIEL ALLEN, and others, Committee.

THE TOWN OF READING:

A sister town that still retains her maiden name; let us therefore cherish her, (as we cherish *other maiden sisters*, that do not choose to change their names,) for being "true to her first love,"—the love of our mother.

In response, Deacon Caleb Wakefield, of Reading, offered the following:

THE TOWN OF SOUTH READING:

The eldest sister of the Readings; like other daughters, she has changed her name in anticipation of a *fine house*; may her love for the *new one* survive the honeymoon, and may future generations approve the mother's choice.

If we may find "books in trees," and "sermons in stones," why not *speeches* in *fields*,—especially in *Wake-fields*,—and more especially in Hon. Horace P. Wakefield.

To which the Hon. Horace P. Wakefield, of Monson, Mass., responded as follows:—

MR. PRESIDENT: Here in this glorious old town of Reading, more glorious by the new name she now assumes, on this glorious day of American Independence, more glorious because enjoyed "in the sweat of the brows" of free men and free women, "the high and the low, the rich and the poor" meet together on a common level, the millionaire from his stately mansion, and the humble dependent from the almshouse, gloriously independent in the thought that the "Lord is the Maker of us all," and gloriously dependent that the same Being is the Preserver of us all. I received a few days since, away off in my new home, from your Committee of Arrangements, a kind invitation to join you in the festivities of this day, which I gladly accepted, because many early joyous reminiscences cluster around the old town, and to me there are many

pleasing associations connected with the name she is now assuming. Why you have thus early called me up, I am at a loss to discern, unless it be on the principle that little balloons are sent up to ascertain how the wind veers, and what is the force of the current, while the big ones are being inflated. One thing is certain, you have caught me, if not napping, so full of dinner that I have no capacity to be blown up, and no power to blow off.

Having listened with great pleasure to the flowing measures of the Poet, and the polished periods of the Orator of the day, I quietly seated myself among the lower classes and enjoyed the repast, as you know I always do, not expecting that you would call on one from the "ignobile vulgus" until the distinguished characters sitting around you in the higher seats had been called on to speak.

Mr. President, I was not born in the town of South Reading, nor in Wakefield, for two reasons to me perfectly satisfactory: First, I was born too soon,—before the town of South Reading, or Wakefield, had an existence — and therefore must be reckoned among the old fogies ; and second, I was not consulted about where I should be born, although I was there. However, I was born within a stone's throw of the line of Wakefield, on the original Pool place, near the head of the Pond, in the vernacular, but in the euphonious Indian dialect, "Lake Quannapowit." I would make no boast of being cradled in a manger, but I was born in what is now a barn-shed, which then stood in what is now the highway. From birth in a barn-shed, and by the wayside, the transition is so easy to the almshouse, that "the wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err therein."

When on my way to this gathering, a friend asked me if I was going to the "Wakefield celebration," and whether the town was so named in honor of your humble servant. To the first inquiry I answered promptly in the affirmative; to the latter I gave an evasive answer, remarking that I did not furnish the funds, and further your deponent said not. I was placed in about as embarrassing a position as my friend Cyrus used to find himself in, when he was quizzed respecting the doings of the Great and General Court, some years ago, before he became a member of the Third House. It so

happened a few years ago, that this senatorial district was represented by one bearing the name of Wakefield, and as almost every one supposed that there was no other but *the* Cyrus Wakefield, he occasionally was plied with hard questions, had to put on senatorial dignity and get along the best way he could. I can now seem to realize how he must have felt under the circumstances. I can stand the honor attached to it, but when they come to talk about the amount the honor costs, it makes me feel as poor as a church mouse.

Mr. President, the wheel of fortune is round, and is constantly turning. A few years ago our friend who bears my name and has just given it to the town, was as poor as I am to-day. He has revolved with fortune's wheel and run to the top, while I am sure I cannot go down below an almshouse, and if the wheel turns at all I must come up. It is said that the good deacon planted white birches for the especial benefit of his rising scions, and I distinctly remember that such stood near the old mansion in my younger days, "a terror to evil doers." Our friend has come up on fattan, and perhaps if I had had the rattan instead of the birch, I should have avoided some places where it is not safe to go. However, of one thing I am dead sure, that on one day of the year, on "the 4th of Independence," although I may have less bonds, stocks and mortgages than others, I am as independent as any live man, and if any body feels better than I do, I am sure he feels pretty good. If there be any honor attached to the name, I am going in for my share of it, and I hereby give my friend timely notice that such is my intent. It makes no difference to our ancestors, now sleeping beneath the clods of the valley, from which line the money came, or from which line came the name. It is all the same to them, and a hundred years hence it will make no difference to his boys, or to mine. It will be sufficient, if those who come after us shall see strictly to it that no blot shall attach to the name of Wakefield, and that their escutcheon shall be sullied by no act, that, dying, they would wish to erase. I rejoice in the great prosperity of our friend, can appreciate his liberal generosity, do not envy him his wealth with his cares, anxieties and perplexities, and have only this request to make, that he would see to it, that no one bearing

the family name, coming from the stock originating from the side of the Pond, should be left to die in an almshouse.

I also congratulate you, Mr. President, in having another generous, noble-hearted citizen in this original settlement of old Reading, to-day christened Wakefield. This whole-souled fellow townsman proposes to furnish the stately edifice the other large-hearted gentleman proposes to erect. Well may any town change its name for such liberal offers. Fortunate is that town that has its quiver full of them. Sir, I have known him like a book, boy and man, for almost sixty years. We were born in the same parish, in the same town, and in the same year, attended the same school and the same church, played the same games on the same green, strolled through the same fields, fished in the same pond, hunted in the same forests, studied the same profession, and graduated at the same medical institution. Here the similarity ends, and our paths diverged. I went to peddling pills, and he to peddling bitters. He has accumulated a fortune, deals in stocks and bonds and rides in a coach, while I, who began life as poor as Job's turkeys, have held my own well, and at last have turned up in an almshouse.

Thanking, through you, Mr. President, the audience for the attention they have given me, aware that all are anxiously waiting for "the feast of reason and flow of soul" that awaits them from many of the "Old Boys" who have come back to pay respects to their "alma mater," as she assumes a new name I give you :

The prolonged health and continued prosperity of the two public-spirited citizens by whose munificent liberality we have enjoyed the festivities of the natal day of our beloved country. May they live a thousand years, their shadows never grow less, and "lay up for themselves treasures where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal."

OUR NEW NAME:

May it prove to be an enduring monument to the energy, enterprise, industry and liberality of our distinguished fellow-citizen, Cyrus Wakefield, a well-known merchant prince; and may the inspiration resulting from the adoption of his name, culminate in the adoption of his distinguishing characteristics, so that he may enjoy the high satisfaction of seeing that we have not taken his name in vain.

Cyrus Wakefield, Esq., responded as follows:

MR. PRESIDENT, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN :

On this festal occasion, and surrounded with this joyous assemblage, I may appropriately remark — and rejoice — that the *name*, this day publicly assumed, seems likely to prove as pleasing to others, as to *myself*.

Once only, have I had occasion to urge the adoption of my name by another, — and the successful termination of that suit, so satisfactory to both the interested parties, induces the hope of a similar result from the present union.

In the *first instance*, however, I did not *expect* a family of *four thousand*, with a fair prospect of numerous additions. This verification of the patriarchal promise may well demand the exercise of all the *energies* of which I am the possessor, — and has given me, to-day, a family so ample and satisfying, as to preclude the adoption of *another*.

Mr. President, — Industry, energy, perseverance and progress are *solid* subjects to be discussed in an after-dinner, Fourth of July speech ; but, as I have cited an instance of *successful perseverance*, we may consider, briefly, the first-named themes, with reference to starting in life.

Imagine a lad, favored with a robust constitution and the enjoyment of perfect health, a member of his father's family in the small town of Roxbury, in New Hampshire (a town, whose name is now extinct), employed, with his brothers, in the cultivation of one of the roughest farms to be found in that rocky, rugged locality, and enjoying such slight educational advantages as that neighborhood afforded ; a spot, where the schoolmaster was deemed *qualified* for teaching, only because he was *dis-qualified*, physically, for any other occupation ; where schools were a luxury, only to be enjoyed during three months of the year, and where the best educated man of his acquaintance (next to the minister) was his own father, who, at the same time, served as Town Clerk, Selectman and Representative, and being, also, a Justice of the Peace, could marry a couple, occasionally, as he had leisure.

You can easily imagine what were this boy's privileges, and what

his means of improvement and culture ; but you *cannot imagine the variety of his thoughts*, as from those secluded fields he looked wonderingly and inquisitively into the future, and asked himself if he should never venture beyond the quiet scenes of his boyhood !

When, at length, this lad heard of the fame of Mr. Appleton, and others, who had emerged from an obscurity like his own, and were then widely and honorably known in the business world, he began to study the elements of their prosperity and success, and finally decided to try *his* luck in the great world of trade.

Notwithstanding his good father's gloomy forebodings,—predicting possible loss of health, loss of character, and an ignoble return to the parental roof,—at the age of fifteen years he came to Boston, and procured a situation in a retail grocery store. Here, for three years, he was employed in the performance of duties such as are usually assigned to boys, in similar situations, and, during all those years, he was studying *men*, — and the *circumstances which had made them*.

He visited the various churches ; observed, carefully, the habits of the people ; listened, attentively, to scientific lectures and the discussion of important topics, and thus prepared himself for his after career.

Do you wonder, Mr. President, that, with so many shining examples around him, with the New Hampshire farm far in the rear, and fading from his vision, and the clear, ever-brightening prospect of success before him, he was prompted to work, most persistently, to gain a position among the prosperous throng which surrounded him ?

Is it surprising that, thus situated, in the “Athens of America,” — the “Hub of the Universe,”—his active mind should ponder the questions, — whether it really *was* the “Hub,” around which everything beautiful revolved ; whether the State House *was* the head of the spike which, reaching through to the other side, and being clinched, near India, held the world together ; and whether this fact gave Thomas H. Perkins, and others, their first idea of the India trade ?

So much is sure, — the mystic, *clinching point*, in after years became to him a veritable market, and now supplies him with its various and valuable commodities of traffic.

And to-day he can look *away* from Boston, over the green hills and fertile fields of the home of his adoption, and read upon the banner of *this* people, "*Energy, Industry, Perseverance and Progress,*" as their motto, *now and forever*.

Fellow-Citizens: you have honored the *name* of that humble boy whose early years we have traced, by placing it upon your beautiful township; but it would bring me no satisfaction, had not your unsought and unanimous decision assured me it had a place, more imperishable, on the tablets of your hearts.

Allow me to close with the following sentiment:

MY ADOPTED FAMILY:

May their shadows—or number—never be less.

THE CHAPLAIN OF THE DAY.

May he consider that the so called "good old way" is not the *only* way to promote the welfare of the church, and bear in mind that even *this* age *may* be the much-talked-of "golden age."

Rev. Mr. Bliss responded, as follows:

MR. PRESIDENT: It is fortunate that the "old ways" are not the only true ways, and it is equally fortunate that most true ways are old. While age cannot consecrate error, it does accumulate arguments for the truth; and hence, while the past may not control our judgment, it is yet wise to invoke its counsel, and consider it well before we reject it. Happily it is the just pride of our New England communities that their history is so honorable. No true son of this soil can fail to gain both instruction and pleasure in tracing the quaint, shrewd and honest ideas and methods of our Puritanic ancestors. Time has removed much from both their civil and religious usages that was cumbersome and perhaps wrong; but much more still remains that has stood the test.

Of the institutions founded by the first settlers of this ancient town, and now existing among us, the oldest is the Old Church, in whose name it is my privilege to speak to-day. Founded before the town itself was incorporated, running back in its history almost to the landing of the Pilgrims, it has now made good progress in the third century of its existence. Doubtless it has been one of the immovable things in this locality; to the "old ways" it has

adhered. Its regular worship was probably never suspended ; its doctrinal tenets have never been changed ; nor has it ceased to maintain a resolute warfare against irreligion and vice. Allow me to read to you one of its ancient articles, one of the foundation stones laid in 1644, and good enough to be new.

"We hereby promise to demean and behave ourselves obediently in all lawful things to those yt God hath placed over us in ye Church and Commonwealth, knowing yt is our duty not to grieve them but to encourage them in their places. And we resolve to approve ourselves in our particular callings, shunning Idleness, not slothful in business, knowing yt Idleness is ye bane of any society. Neither will we deal hardly or oppressingly with any over whom we are ye Lords Stewards; Promising to our best abilities to teach our Children ye good knowledge of ye Lord yt they also may learn to serve and fear him with us yt it may go well with them and with us forever."

No one familiar with the history of our own favored community can fail to see that this article, joined with others, more distinctively religious, and embodied in the public avowals and professions of the first religious organization of the place, and the only one for more than one hundred and fifty years, must have had a living influence in shaping the character of our law-abiding and industrious citizens.

But the old church has ever been abreast with the progressive tendencies of the times. Indeed she has sometimes been in advance of them, and I will prove to you that she has even been an avowed patron of the fine arts. Like other accomplishments, that of Music found little favor at the hands of our ancestors until the church, with its pastor at its head, having heard that there was "an art of singing," took active measures to cultivate it. The peculiarities of the record which describes the steps that were taken in behalf of the object, will, I think, justify me in reading it to you. It was made by the pastor, Rev. Richard Brown, in the year 1722, and is as follows :

"There having been sad confusion, which I often observed for several years past and did often in ye public mention with trouble, and pray might be reformed, in our singing—some were above others, some were before others, and all ys as I apprehended for want of going

more together which I urged to no purpose; and I, understanding yt yr was a Rule, Lookt on it. And conceiving that ye knowledge and keeping to ye rule would prevent ys confusion in publick worship, I promoted learning to Sing. To ys end several publick Lectures were had, ye 1st preached by my selfe, ye 2nd by Mr. Syms, ye 3rd by Mr. Fisk; in each of which we Sang 4 times exact by ye rule, no man opposing. A school was set up; many both men and women Learnt. Some indeed were not clear in it, as by mistake conceiving it popery; but at length having been encouraged in it by several, and by all ye Deacons, Capt. Pool, Capt. Burnap, Ensign Bancroft, Serg't Thos. Pool and Lt Bryant, they Sang with ye wisht success. Nov. 8, being Thanksgiving day I proposed to ye Church and Congregation to sing by rule, and, by what I had heard, not expecting any opposition, I said yt if they were all willing I would take yr silence for consent; and no man answered one word, but all were silent and went away."

Thus the way was led from one of the "old paths" into one of the new by the Minister himself, "no one opposing"; and a familiar acquaintance with the numerous advantageous changes in social and political as well as religious affairs that have occurred in the process of time throughout New England, will show that a majority of them had a similar origin. The marked progress of two and a half centuries has been made not in spite of, but generally according to, the wishes, and by the aid of the churches. It is then by keeping in the old paths that genuine New Englanders make new ones. Our Fathers were progressives; and to become bound by any forms or old usages or old beliefs simply because they are old, is to be untrue to their teachings.

The long history of this still flourishing church presents other points of interest. Detachments from her forces assisted in taking possession of several other important fields. The churches of Lynnfield, North Reading, Wilmington, Ashby, the Old South at Reading and that at Stoneham, were founded in whole or in part by members from her communion. To these churches she sustained the relation of a careful mother, assisting some of them by liberal contributions; and if she ever thought herself compelled to resort to any discipline with any of them, it might have been because she had previously imparted to them a full share of her own energetic spirit, which, with a common parental weakness, she may have admired in them while she withstood it.

I will not however, trespass longer upon your time. We rejoice in the prospect before us to-day; but we have no right to do so by reason of any hardships, or failures of the past, for if any people of the world have just occasion to be proud of their history we are that people. Yet there are causes for rejoicing. This is, perhaps, in the language of the toast just read, the "golden age." The growing importance of our corporate and individual interests, the prosperity of our educational and religious affairs, and the increasing beneficence of Providence toward our whole community, call for real thankfulness to-day. Though in history we are old, in spirit we are new, and it should be a welcome duty not only to preserve but to improve our heritage,—a heritage which, while it shows the worth of our Fathers, gives higher evidence of the faithfulness of Him whom they served.

THE HISTORIAN OF THE DAY:

As he is now encircled by a halo of glory, for what he has done and said for the *old name of South Reading*, we trust that a "*crown of glory*" awaits him for what he may do and say for the *new name of Wakefield*.

Mr. Eaton responded as follows:

MR. PRESIDENT: I am under high obligations to my talented friend, the toast master, for the very complimentary manner in which he has referred to me. He has given me a subject, on which to say a word in response,—town history.

The true glory of the historian arises mainly from the truthfulness of his narration, and the glory and interest of a town history depend chiefly upon the intelligence, the enterprise and the virtue of the successive inhabitants. The past history of our town is a noble and an honorable one. Whether as a village of *Lynn*, or as the original town of *Reading*, or as the *First Parish of Reading*, or as the *town of South Reading*.

May her future history, under the name of "*Wakefield*," like the new temple at ancient Jerusalem, exceed "in glory" all former renown.

THE POET OF THE DAY:

Who, in the past, from time to time
Has entertained us with his rhyme;
By his fair muse inspired to-day,
We've heard him sing her choicest lay.

Mr. J. S. Eaton responded, as follows:

Enough,—more than enough,—we said
On yonder hillock's breezy head,—
And therefore did not come,—*in-tent*—
Still to increase your punishment!

A moment, only, let us claim,
To swell the praise of our new name.

May the clear future of our Town
Place brighter jewels in her crown;
Starting, afresh, on upward way,
In the pure splendor of this day,
Win fame, on high and classic field—
Such fame as cultured skill can yield!

(*Win-ships*, she *might*, to her fair shores,
If, smooth, her mountain's granite doors
Some earthquake-shock would downward slide,
And give an entrance to the tide ;)

Win wealth, she *may*—the wealth of *Mind*,—
(More lasting than the gilded kind.)
And on her graceful, shining towers,
Bind garlands of perennial flowers!

OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS:

Inasmuch as they are so many *fields* for the cultivation of the human mind, it is fitting that they should be here represented by a *highly cultivated Man's-field*.

Edward Mansfield, Treasurer of the Board of School Committee, and, for many years an active and important member of that Board, responded as follows:

Mr. PRESIDENT: In behalf of the schools, I thank you for the kind mention you have been pleased to make of them on the present occasion. On *every* proper occasion the importance of our institutions of learning should be recognized and duly acknowledged.

One thought impressed me, Sir, as on our route I turned to view the procession, and saw so large a portion of the children and youth of this town, following their seniors, seemingly delighted with the enchanting music and the imposing pageantry of this festive day.

The thought was this. The children are following in our footsteps, having the same object in view as ourselves. We are marching to a particular goal, and *they* are upon the course, and coming after us. They press on to occupy each portion of the pathway as we leave it. They are following closely and rapidly to fill the places of those who immediately precede them.

Thus it is in the march of life. As the fathers reach their appointed goal, the children press forward to fill the places they have left.

The schools of to-day are moulding the characters of those who are to be assigned to the places which we now occupy; who in all matters of life are to perform the parts which we are now acting. They are to furnish the caterers, committees of arrangements, toast-masters, presidents, orators and poets, for future celebrations.

The schools of to-day are forming minds that are to shape and control the future destiny of the cherished institutions we have loved so well.

Who, then, that rightly estimates the importance of our public schools, will withhold his encouragement and sympathy?

I rejoice, Mr. President, that, in taking a new name, we *need not*—we *cannot* obliterate the past history of old South Reading. Its liberal record connected with the march of improvement is indelibly written. It is one of the proudest records of which our citizens have to boast. Let it stand as an enduring monument of the past, and as an encouragement to future generations, to carry on and complete the work which the fathers began.

OUR GREAT NATIONAL BANKS:

Hon. N. P. Banks—a first-class National Institution, with unlimited “resources,” including a never-failing stock of *good sense*.

In response the following letter was read:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

WASHINGTON, D. C., June 19, 1868.

GENTLEMEN: Your letter of the 1st instant, inviting me to attend the celebration of the changing of the name of the town of "South Reading" to "Wakefield," was received yesterday. If it is in my power to obtain leave of absence, I will gladly accept your invitation; but the pressure of business is such, that I fear it will not be possible.

I congratulate the citizens of the town on the change which is proposed, as well as upon the munificence of its citizens, and the advantages likely to be derived therefrom in the future. There is not within my knowledge, a better illustration of the duties due from a citizen to a town, and from a town to its citizens who perform their duties, than is presented in this event which you so appropriately celebrate.

I should be glad, if it were in my power to be present to make expression of this feeling, but if it should be otherwise, I trust you will accept the statement of the condition of public business, and especially of matters in which I am officially concerned, as a sufficient reason for my absence.

I am, with great respect,

Your obed't serv't,

N. P. BANKS.

Messrs. DANIEL ALLEN, and others, Committee.

OUR PHYSICIANS:

May they always endeavor to "*keep cool;*" for, when our doctors *lose* their patients, we shall lose our lives.

In response, Dr. Solon O. Richardson gave the following sentiment:

THE WONDERFUL CANE OF WAKEFIELD.

The cultivation of this important exotic, introduced into our neighborhood for experimental purposes, by our worthy townsman, has been attended with so much success as to create astonishment throughout our whole Commonwealth.

By exquisite culture of this flexible reed, our friend has converted arid and waste places into thrifty and blooming gardens;

its fertility has enhanced the value of our property, augmented our population and dwellings; and in one fruiting season — marvellous to relate — it yielded a magnificent palace, which stands to-day one of the most admired and attractive features of our county.

The present season being a bearing year of this wonderful cane, located on the corner of Main and Water Streets, it is preparing to blossom, from which fruit will ripen that for many generations will remain undecayed, and endure for ages a grateful and imperishable memorial of the enterprise and liberality of the ingenious cultivator of the Wakefield cane.

May a long and happy life be spared to our worthy friend; and may this cane of a thousand forms, which has been so fruitful to him, still continue to be his support, until he is called to meet his prototype Cyrus of old, in that kingdom where "Cain is never raised."

HON. JOHN PRENTISS.

Although *one* of the oldest—if not *the* oldest—living descendant of the town, he has a sound mind in a sound body, and is a *Keen(e)* observer of passing events.

This sentiment received a response in the following letter from Hon. John Prentiss, of Keene, N. H., now ninety years of age:

KEENE, N. H., June, 1868.

GENTLEMEN,—I thank you for your very kind invitation to attend the "Wakefield" celebration on the 4th proximo, with the complimentary card.

Having within a few weeks made my accustomed annual visit to the capital, to children and grandchildren in the vicinity, and my native village and cherished relatives in its environs, and feeling that age will have its infirmities, though hitherto, for the most part kindly withheld, I cannot promise, nor do I expect it will be convenient to comply, though, I trust, I properly appreciate your respect and attention.

Of the associates of my youth, (leaving "the first parish" in Old Reading, in 1792, aged 14,) but one sturdy limb,—I trust yet unblanched by storms of ninety winters,—the venerable Col. Harts-horn, to my recollection remains.

Last year I visited him, and we then reviewed some of the scenes of our youthful days.

They were the days of the old Confederation, and the three succeeding the adoption of the Federal Constitution. They were days of great trials, succeeding a long contest for independence, which we, as children, could not then appreciate. Ancient Reading did her part nobly in the great Revolution, and the sons and grandsons of venerated sires amongst you can tell from their lips or from faithful tradition, the tales of suffering, patience, and final triumph. But your forthcoming history need not be anticipated.

I often reflect, with pleasure and satisfaction, upon the scenes and events of these youthful days, the days of the strictest necessary economy, but not the days of thrift, the days of barter and exchange; when a bushel of corn, at 2s. 6d., was about equal to the labor of a day, and orders on the Parish Treasurer, for labor or sundries, paid very many ministers' taxes.

But I remember also the rural harmony and friendly greetings and visitings, the happy circles of these primitive days, and many other events so vividly described by your honored bi-centennial poet.

But time has destroyed most of the ancient landmarks. Boston boasted her 20,000 to 25,000 inhabitants, but with few suburban delights. So, Old Reading, (first Parish) but the *territory*, "hardly excelled in the attractions of its scenery," will ever remain. Her gentle hills; her smiling valleys; her inimitable principal "Lake," delighting at the present day, as it did us boys eighty years ago, in the pastimes of sailing, fishing, bathing and skating, are stationary with time.

The *Square* of ancient days has become a triangle; the glorious old oaks and the lofty elms have given place to modern improvements, and their prototypes, the Emersons, the Eatons, the Goulds, the Sweetser, the Smiths, the Browns, the Hartshorns, the Bryants, and others of former days, have departed, while their numerous descendants, in their places, and scattered over our wide domain, may be counted by hundreds, and quiet *Oldest* Reading, with her winding roads and pathways, is cut up into streets with modern adornments, threatening to become "no mean city."

Doubtless for entirely satisfactory reasons, you have let old Reading "slide" from your midst; but it is still there with its indelible marks, and for its continued growth and prosperity, its progressive graces and proportions, its moral and intellectual advancement, I can have or feel no other sensation than to accord the best wishes of, gentlemen,

Yours, etc.,

To Committee of Invitation.

JOHN PRENTISS.

THE SCHOOL-MASTER:

We are pleased to see that he is not "abroad" to-day, but has returned to his native town, with the well-earned title of "Professor of Mathematics;" you will notice his *figure-head*—and, if he speaks, he will adopt highly *figurative* language.

Professor George A. Walton, now of Westfield, Mass., responded as follows:

MR. PRESIDENT: The toast master has been pleased to compliment my "*figure-head*."

If we have made any *figure* in the world, we owe it to old South Reading; she always made the most in her power of the heads and hearts of her sons and daughters. It is gratifying to see the same spirit of town and State pride, and the same patriotic fervor animating her poets and orators to-day, as of yore.

The sentiments of to-day are kindred to the sentiments we lisped, something less than half a century ago, upon the same stage; listen, and you shall hear the voice from the past; tho', with the lapse of time, I may have forgotten something of the measure:

All Hail! to the land, which gave me my birth,
The happiest land there is on the earth;
Where freedom and knowledge together are found,
And pleasures uncounted exist all around.

All Hail! to the State, whose bright fame and glory
Adorn every leaf of our National story;
Which first spilt her blood, as well as her tea,
In defence of the fair liberty tree.

All Hail ! to the Town, which myself was bred in,
 Which bears the musical name of South Reading,
 The pleasantest place, with regard to location,
 To be found anywhere throughout the whole nation.

Two neat spacious Churches, with glittering spires,
 Whose tops are seen sparkling mid Heaven's bright *fires*,
 Proclaim to the world the solemn regard
 The people all feel for the worship of GOD.

Here also is seen, on yonder small mount,
 The temple of science, wherein is a fount,
 From which issue forth, in abundant profusion,
 The rich honeyed streams of a fair education.

The next thing of note which comes to our view,
 Is the old centre School-house, part old and part new,
 A black shapeless old mass, much more fitting
 For blacksmiths and tinkers than schools and town meetings.

The next thing in course, which attention doth summon,
 Is the level and large elegant Common,
 Adorned in summer with carpets of green,
 Where soldiers and children and cattle are seen.

The last though not least thing, which now I shall name,
 Is South Reading Pond, long well known to fame,
 On whose surface in summer there may be seen
 The white sail of the sloop unfurled to the wind :

Where the fisherman finds reward for his toil,
 And the duck hunter's boat is loaded with spoil ;
 Its shores exhibit a scenery so rare
 That scarcely Nahant can with it compare.

These are some of the things, though only a part,
 Which render South Reading so dear to my heart,
 And as your patience is doubtless expended,
 I'll stop where I am — so my story is ended.

South Reading is beautiful for situation ; what can surpass her verdure-crowned hills, or her pensive lakes that lie between ?

A distinguished writer has taught us what we have been slow to learn by observation, that nature does not bestow her gifts with a lavish hand, upon those who deal with her with a hand of stint ; she is human in this, that she knows her friends by the care they bestow upon her.

Nature does not complain that she is not enough flattered, nor that she is here peculiarly overtired, but she delights to do homage to those who appreciate her necessities.

To-day, she does honor to one who has dealt generously with her ; one who realizes that man owes something to nature.

It is fitting, with the inauguration of this new era, that South Reading should have a new name ; and, by a natural law, that name should be bestowed by Cyrus Wakefield.

Let us all join to honor those who find the laws of nature in the generous sentiments of their own hearts, and who observe toward nature ever the golden rule.

All honor to him who has given us the noblest example of that rule ; he has found fertility in barren fields ; may generations on generations in this Wakefield, awake to call him blessed !

HON. FREDERICK A. SAWYER :

Although now an *adopted son* of the Palmetto State, he does not forget that he is, also, a son of the old, liberty-loving Bay State,—and as such, has been rocked in her “Cradle of Liberty.”

In response to this sentiment, the following letter from Hon. F. A. Sawyer, of Charleston, S. C.,—who was formally Principal of the High School, in Wakefield, and is now Senator elect from South Carolina, to the Congress of the United States, was read :

CHARLESTON, S. C., June 27, 1868.

Messrs. D. ALLEN, and others, Committee :

GENTLEMEN: It is gratifying to one so long a stranger to the beautiful scenes of your village, that he might well expect to have passed from the memories of its people, to receive evidence that he is still remembered by those among whom it was his lot and his privilege to dwell, for a brief period of his life.

The receipt of your kind invitation was a pleasant surprise. I regret, sincerely, that the nature of my engagements prevents my being present with my old friends and neighbors, and accepting again a hospitality I have so often found so warm and so generous. It would be a double gratification to be able to join in celebrating the anniversary of the nation's natal day, and the birth of the town of "Wakefield."

My hopes and my good wishes will be present with my old friends of "South Reading," and I can joyously anticipate that the well-won and well-worn honors of the old town, may be succeeded by greater prosperity, richer privileges, and higher hopes of the citizens of the new.

With the best wishes, not only to him in whose honor "South Reading" retires, and "Wakefield" appears, but to all the citizens who have lived in the former, or who may live in the latter,

I subscribe myself with grateful regard,

Your ob't serv't,

FREDERICK A. SAWYER.

THE BOSTON AND MAINE RAILROAD:

Her *Jo(e)cose* Conductor is capable of "conducting" a *train of thought*, as well as a *train of cars*—and he is not only a native here, and "to the manor born," but also *A-born* poet.

Joseph W. Aborn, a veteran conductor upon the road referred to, responded as follows:

When first I heard it projected
 That on this, our great natal day,
 Some orators might be expected;
 With speeches and poems to say;—
 And, remembering the adage so famous,—
 "*In peace-time for war be prepared*,"—
 I hope that no one will blame us,
 That to write out a speech we have dared.
 And now, if there is no sort of objection,
 From my pocket shall this speech be unrolled;
 Or shall I, on sober reflection,
 Leave my maidenly story untold?

My friends, I really pleasure find
 In standing here to-day,
 To help the silken cord to bind,
 And help her children say
 To old South Reading, always dear,
 "Tho' we your *name* have changed,"—
 (We are come together— all are here—
 No child of yours estranged—)
 "That in our hearts, as fond and dear,
 Nor matters what the name,
 We hold you still, with constant cheer,
 Our good old native *home*, the same!"
 What's in a name? The same bright skies,
 The same green fields and laughing lakes
 Are ours,— and were our father's prize;—
 We hold them for our children's sakes.

Take, then, the name! There's naught to fear
 In the exchange— to it we yield:—
 We'll give the *old* a parting tear,
 And add to *home* another *field*!
Wake! then, the song of jubilee!
 Re-christen, on this glorious morn,
 Our good old town, and let it be
 Preserved by children yet unborn!

While, to-day, we worthily praise the attractiveness of our *Wake-field*, let us remember another *Man's-field*,— fruitful and flowery,— yielding *grapes*, most delicious, and *wines*, always *currant*.

Dr. J. D. Mansfield responded as follows:

MR. PRESIDENT: In assuming our new name, we would not forget, nor slightly pass over, the memories and heroic deeds of our fathers.

For it was they who first selected for a settlement this beautiful site among these lakes, hills and valleys. They, too, first levelled and ploughed our forests, planted our orchards, laid out our

streets, erected our dwellings and halls of learning, and temples for Christian worship.

They, too, by precept and example, inculcated industry and frugality, and taught the people science, virtue and religion.

No, sir, they must not be forgotten ; and here let us promise that not one fact or pleasant association connected with the name of *South Reading*, shall ever be obliterated from our memories. Circumstances now seem to demand that our future progress shall be under the inspiration of a new name,— that of *Wakefield*.

We wish to *establish our identity*, which, until now, has never been acknowledged ; we wish to sail under our own colors, work out our own destiny, and stand upon our own merits.

THE OCTOGENARIANS OF THE TOWN.

They are ancient and honorable ; it is, therefore, fitting that the *Commander* of the “Ancient and Honorable” should speak for the “*old folks at home*.”

Major George O. Carpenter, of Boston, responded in behalf of the “*old folks*,” as follows :

MR. PRESIDENT : I need not say that I am quite taken by surprise at being called upon on an occasion of this kind ; but, sir, since your toast-master has seen fit to use my name, my interest in all that pertains to this old town will not allow me to be silent. I congratulate you, Mr. President, as I do all the assembled company, on this auspicious event, made doubly interesting on account of its being the anniversary day of a nation’s birth. I love old South Reading,— the most pleasant part of my life has been spent in her midst, and I shall be glad to be again one of her people. You have seen fit, fellow-townsman, for I cannot feel that I am otherwise than one of you, to adopt a change of name ; in doing so, you have adopted one of which you may indeed be proud, one in which you have done honor to a man who in turn has done and is doing nobly for you. I have had the pleasure of many years’ acquaintance with him, and have good reason to know that he is a self-made man — who has battled with misfortune, and by his perseverance and steadiness of purpose, has overcome difficulties which to many strong men would have appeared almost insur-

mountable. Some years ago, in London, I had the good fortune to be present at an entertainment given by a resident American merchant, at his private residence. While there I noticed around his monogram, which appeared in various parts of the house, these words : "Time, Faith, Energy"—most truly emblematic of the career of the host. I was much impressed by them, as I have been many times since ; and I mention this in connection with the incident, now especially as they seem *practically* to have been adopted by our esteemed friend Cyrus Wakefield. Years of Time, through Faith, and an Energy aided by the great physical power with which he has been by nature endowed, have placed him where he now stands,—in a business point of view, I may say, "master of the situation." You cannot realize, my friends, how great are the benefits to result from his connection with you ; all his gains are *yours* ; all his improvements are for *your* advantage. But, Mr. President, let me not forget that there are many other prominent men in this town, who in days gone by have done much for its credit and improvement. It may be unbecoming in me to be personal, but there is one modest, retiring individual, whom I know holds your respect and love ; one who started, among many other important matters, the military spirit in your town ; one who did more in the practical way than any one else, to convince the people of this vicinity that the Massachusetts Volunteer Militia was a *necessity* ; and who, when military matters were at a low ebb, when public opinion took ground against this important arm of the service, supported, from his own resources, a company in this town, which company became the nucleus of the "noble record" which South Reading was able to make when the nation, through the Governor, called upon her for assistance in the country's peril. I allude to our friend, Dr. Solon O. Richardson. Let us not forget such men. In conclusion, sir, I will give you as a sentiment —

THE TOWN OF WAKEFIELD :

May she inherit the virtues of her parent, South Reading.

THE RICHARDSON LIGHT GUARD :

As the "advice," "shin-plasters" and "mint-drops" of their namesake, the Doctor, have inspired them with confidence in him as a good

"backer"; may they have equal confidence in their good "leader,"—inasmuch as the mantle of the "Old Captain" (Emerson) has fallen upon their young Captain, who represents the third generation of a family of captains.

Captain James F. Emerson, in response, offered the following sentiment:

WAKEFIELD:

May it prove to be a field for the culture of industry, economy, and liberality:—may it keep step with the march of improvement, and be blest with unbounded prosperity.

THE YALE ENGINE COMPANY:

Where duty calls, they always go,
And get,—without exception,—
From faithful friends and FIERY FOE,
A very warm reception.

The captain of the "Yale" not having his "*speaking trumpet*" with him, no response was given to this sentiment.

THE PRESS:

The echo of public opinion, and *register* of passing events.

E. N. Walton, Esq., of the Salem Register, a native of the town, responded, in a very appropriate and pleasing speech, of which no copy was preserved.

Speeches, in response to sentiments, were also given by Hon. Harrison Tweed, of Taunton, Mass., and Prof. B. F. Tweed, of St. Louis, Mo.; copies of which, however, are not in the hands of the Committee of Publication.

At four o'clock in the afternoon, a Rowing Regatta, for two-oared and four-oared boats, commenced on the waters of Lake Quaronnawit,—members of the Charlestown Boat Club, being the participants therein,—which furnished a pleasing portion of the celebration.

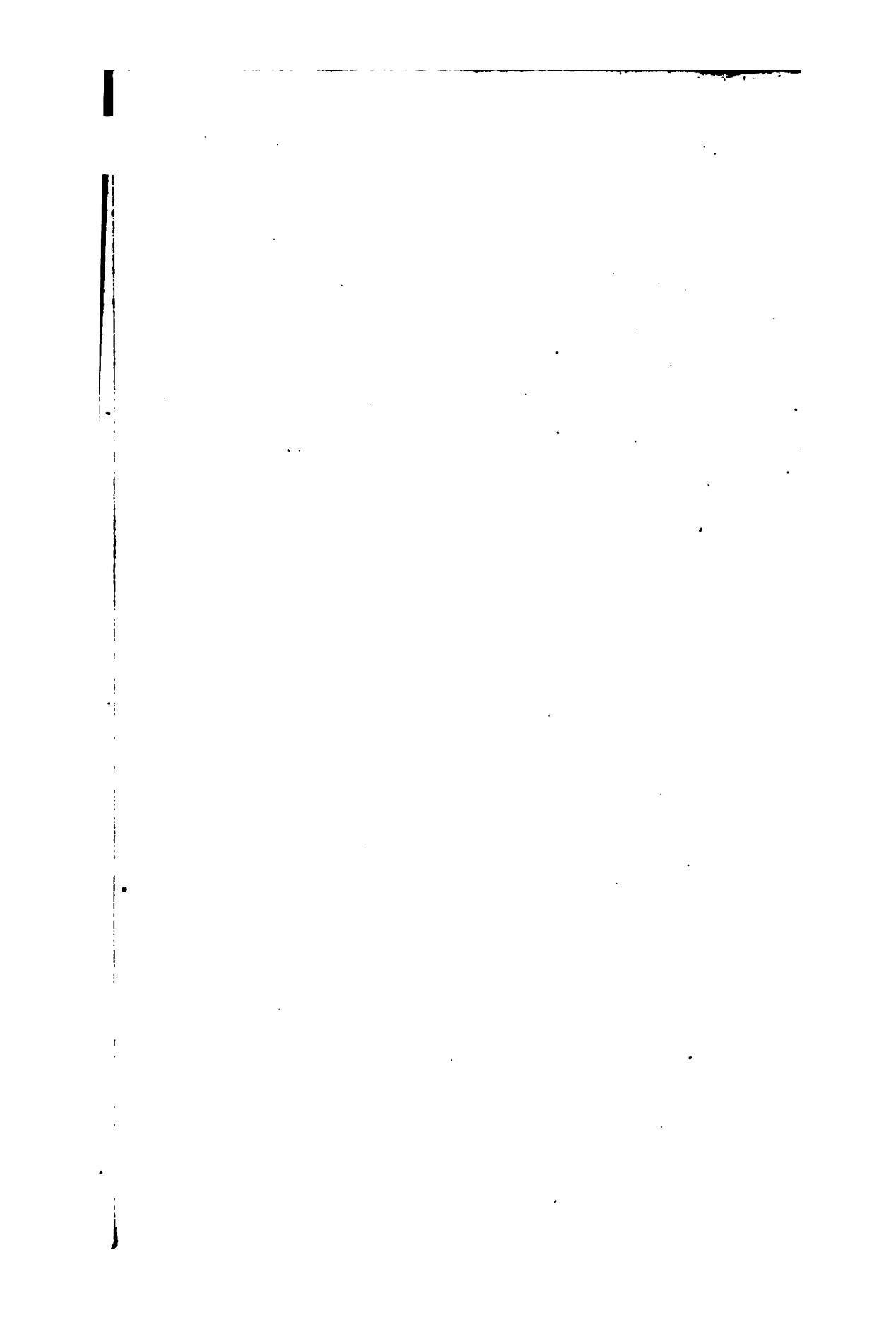
Much credit is due Thomas Emerson, Jr., for his active and successful efforts in securing this exhibition which, notwithstanding the almost unexampled heat of the afternoon, was witnessed and enjoyed by thousands from the shores of this beautiful lake.

A fine display of fireworks, prepared for the occasion by Mr. E. S. Hunt, of Weymouth, interspersed with music by the band, terminated the public exercises of this agreeable and satisfactory celebration.

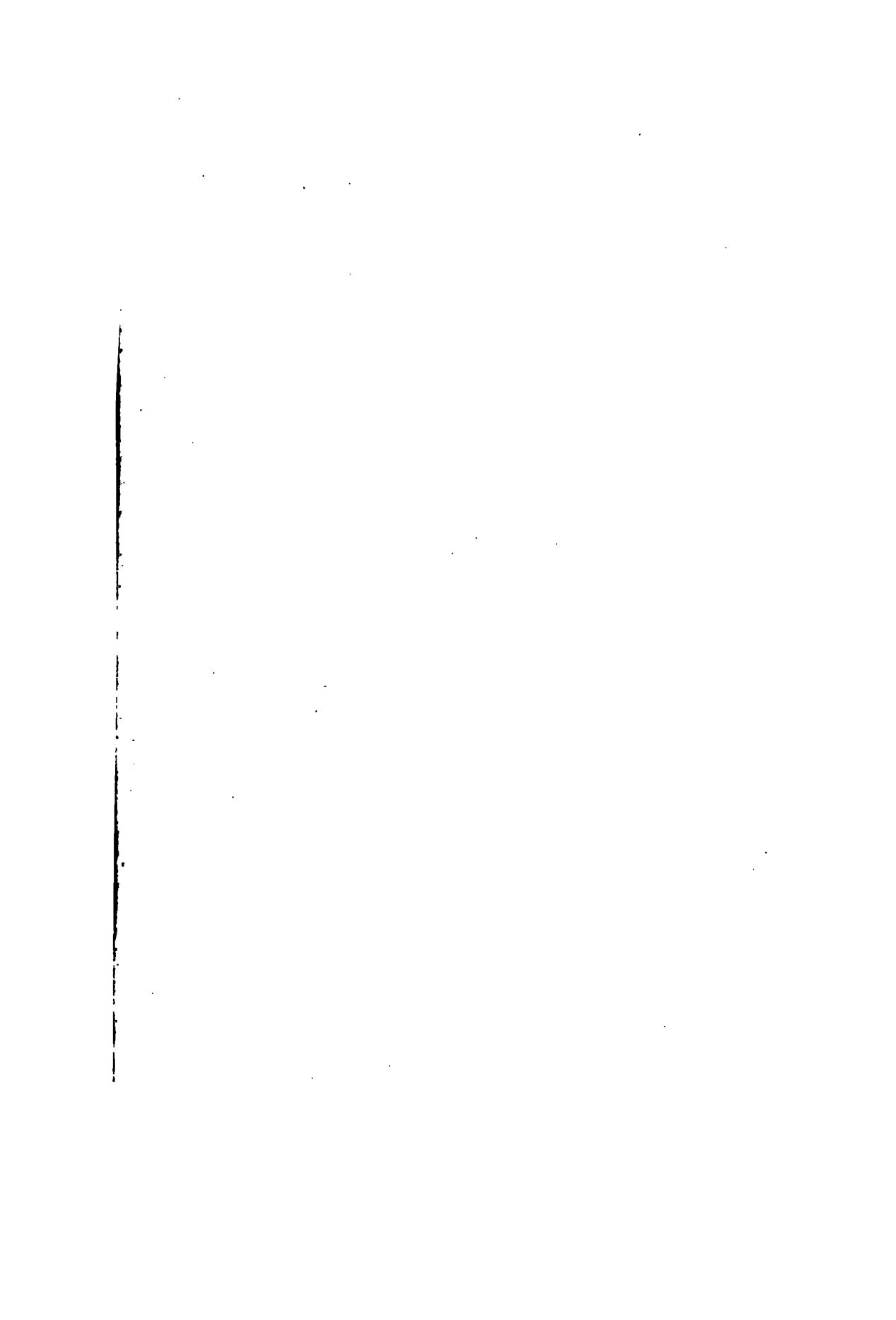
It is worthy of remark that, so perfect were the police arrangements, neither accident nor disturbance marred the pleasures of the day and evening.

Thus, auspiciously, the ancient and attractive town of South Reading continues her honorable career under a new and appropriate title; the *past*, secure in its historic record of achievement,—the *future*, bright with omens of the grander achievements which are to crown the progress of the TOWN OF WAKEFIELD.

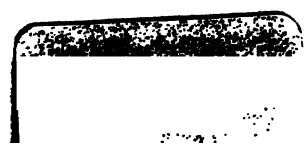












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